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Stier on the Words of the Lord Jesus.
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THE

WORDS OF THE LORD JESUS.

BY

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VOLUME FOURTH.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SECOND REVISED AND ENLARGED GERMAN EDITION,

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM B. POPE.

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THE GOSPEL OF ST LUKE.

THE BENEDICTION PRONOUNCED UPON HIS MOTHER TRANSFERRED TO ALL.

(Ch. xi. 28.)

We have already, in Vol. ii., given our opinion upon the harmonistic relation of the entire section, ch. xi. 17–36, to Matt. xii. 25–45; expressing upon this latter passage our conviction that they record one and the same discourse, founded upon one and the same incident—whether the point of time, not definitely marked in either of the three Evangelists, be determined by St Matthew or by St Luke. Adhering, however, to our firm principle, we give the preference to St Matthew's arrangement of our Lord's discourses; when, therefore, St Luke interrupts the general discourse, in vers. 27, 28, by an interjected word, the conclusion of which he had already given us before, we must necessarily assume that this apostrophe of the woman, and our Lord's answer, had occurred in the meantime. But, whether in the midst of the discourse itself (St Matthew's *extract* gives us no appropiate point of connection for it) or at its close, parallel with what is related in Matt. xii. 46–50, Mar. iii. 31–35, and what St Luke himself has already recorded in ch. viii. 19–21—who shall determine? We manifestly see that the otherwise so well-informed Luke is indistinct in the chronology of these things generally. The ἐν τῷ λέγειν ταῦτα, ver. 27, may refer to the immediately preceding words, and to that supposition we would prefer to adhere; but they may also refer to the

entire discourse, the order of which was different from that given by him.

It is remarkable that in close succession, or directly in connection, the Lord took a double occasion to decline for His mother any distinctive honour—once in respect to her own person, and once in respect to the woman who blessed her in the crowd. It is very natural that His answer should be on both occasions alike. It has been said that the well-meaning outcry of the woman "stands here very affectionately between the malicious blasphemy and the less malicious demand of a sign." It does, indeed, *so stand here*, but St Matthew shows that this was not the historical sequence of the circumstance. And was the outcry *affectionate?* That would be the case only if it sprang from an earnest feeling and deep understanding; but we doubt this very much, and for our own part see in it, not indeed a wickedly intended, but still a most artlessly unintelligent, outcry of mere womanly feeling.[1] Thus it would be better to say—How serenely the Lord here stands betwixt malicious vituperation on the one hand, and unenlightened empty praise on the other! The woman's "devout attention" to the Lord's solemn discourse had apprehended no more than that this man can speak, and teach, and preach with most wonderful force and interest; and this idle commendation she gives, moreover, to His mere human personality, for she, like a true woman, pronounces the *mother* blessed who had borne and bred a son like this.[2] "O how must thy mother rejoice over thee—would that I were she!" What a mournful contrast to the entirely opposite feeling which, according to Mar. iii. 20, 21, at this very time filled the mind of that mother of Jesus!

The Lord's answer refers not *to that*, it may be; but it refers to this, that His mother as such had no preeminent sanctity or blessedness; and it is the impulse of the Spirit which prompts Him to take every occasion to rebuke prospectively that future service of Mary, the innocent germ of which was heard in such an apostrophe as this woman's. By the μενοῦνγε standing first, He concedes all that is true and right—that to have

[1] No "child-like devotion" of this "affectionate woman"—no such "expression of a simple love" as the Lord would *approve of*. (Braune.)

[2] Not the *nurse* in addition, as Thiess inferred from the words.

borne Him was indeed her honour; but at the same time He corrects the false distinction established. Only *because* Mary had received the word of God with such entire and unhesitating faith, had she received that honour. "Blessed are they who rightly *hear the word of God;* and not as thou hearest it, O woman, who fallest so readily from the solemn matter spoken to the mother of Him who speaks it!" In repudiating the praise, and repelling all consideration for His human person as such, He does not say—*My* word; but testifies only that He speaks the *word of God*, in the comprehensiveness of meaning which includes all that had ever been spoken in human ears, and all that would yet be revealed for man's salvation. "My mother," He will say, "is only on that account blessed, because she has heard, and treasured up in faith, the word spoken to herself;" see Luke i. 45; ii. 19, 51. The *keeping* God's word is partly the test of *true* hearing; partly its fruit and consequence, which must never be wanting: first, however, the "provident treasuring up of deep words" of God, which, though not fully understood then, will be better understood afterwards, as we see in the case of Mary herself; but then, also, the actual fruitbearing after receiving the seed, the *doing* which must follow the hearing of the word, Luke viii. 15, 21. The entire saying is itself in its universal comprehensiveness given for the right hearing, and pondering, and keeping of His disciples. What the conception and bringing forth of Jesus was, in the case of Mary, the Lord shows in its spiritual and essential accomplishment in all who receive His word for the new birth of their souls, and in this sense become like His mother. (Lu. viii. 21.) This apparently slight circumstance is a genuine type of what has, alas, been realised in after times; bearing in itself the germ of that which it typified. Instead of doing like Mary, and becoming like Mary, the Church turning away (in secret self-pleasing) from the word *of God* to the human Child who was brought forth, deifies the lowly one, and dishonours her lowliness by the unseemly and unbefitting *θεότοκος*. What is the preaching of the Reformation, as opposed to this, more than the word which the Lord here speaks? In their council of Trent they heard not that voice, but repelled it with anathema—for a *Maranatha* to themselves!

AN EARLIER WOE TO THE PHARISEES AND SCRIBES.

(Luke xi. 39–52 [Matt. xxiii. 2–39.])

That which the Lord uttered against the Scribes and Pharisees in His solemn final condemnation, had been prepared for long before; for, while many of His longer discourses originated in the circumstances of the moment, many of them, on the other hand, were from time to time *accumulated* by Himself, and by degrees prepared and reserved for final and most weighty utterance. We have here a remarkable testimony and example of this latter; the Lord speaks, in a narrower circle and in a more restricted manner, a great part of what was afterwards spoken in a more extended connection. These judgment-formulæ were formed and shaped, as it were, within His soul; and an occasion from without calls them, in all their preliminary and prospective solemnity, readily to His lips. Thus it were better for us to say, that He now *anticipates* this impending farewell of these fools and blind, rather than that He *repeats* later what had earlier been spoken.

A Pharisee invited Him to a meal,[1] and undoubtedly with a false heart, as at ch. xiv. 1, and vii. 36. They watch Him invidiously, to see how He will demean and express Himself; and with all the less restraint on that account, yea, with a deportment which was immediately offensive, like a challenge in their own house, He εἰσελθὼν ἀνέπεσεν, without further ado, designedly omitting the Pharisaical washing (see on Matt. xv. 2). While the Pharisee wondered at such boldness, the Lord's searching answer would anticipate his thoughts before they found utterance.[2] As to the perfectly justified "Divine dispensing with

[1] And, indeed, ἐν δὲ τῷ λαλῆσαι, which, without ταῦτα, appears to have reference to what had immediately preceded—"while He was engaged in this conversation;"—but as this can hardly be reconciled with harmonistic considerations, especially when the mass of matter connected together in St Luke is taken into account, we may translate with Ebrard—When on one occasion He was thus speaking.

[2] Schleiermacher's useless refinement imagined that our Lord would have washed at a δεῖπνον, and that the Pharisee took it ill that his ἄριστον

civilities," which the Lord exhibits, who is Lord even while He is guest, Ebrard has well said, in reply to the unjustified censure of the critic—"I will warrant the worthy Strauss, that if the Lord were at *his* table in the present day, He would be just as *uncivil!*" Everything has its time, the cutting severity and the patient benignity; and the Lord knew full well what was on this occasion seasonable. There must, indeed, have been assembled around this ἄριστον a select and purified company; and the Lord only expressed to them in His word and act, what their secret guiltiness had already prepared for them in His heart.

The discourse divides itself into two parts, each of which embraces *three* woes, ordered thus in precise and solemn number, though not like the latter perfected seven. The former portion is directed against the hypocrisy of the Pharisees; but as a *lawyer* (νομικός is, as ver. 53 shows, almost the same as the former, but indicating more definitely the office) expressly vindicates his own caste, the latter is directed against the conduct of the lawyers particularly, in whom was especially concentrated the guilt of the general unbelief of the people, and its condemnation.[1] At the outset, *hypocrisy*, which cleanses the outside instead of the inward part, is, without a woe and half in irony, rebuked:—the immediate occasion being found in the washings upon which the Pharisees laid such stress, but at the same time making that the type of their own proper character and conduct. Vers. 39–41. (Afterwards in Matt. xxiii. this is the middle one of the three subsequent and final woes.) The three woes, which are the first here, follow for the more definite description of the Pharisaic *spirit*:—their petty externality in the fulfilment of the law instead of minding its essential substance; the proud lust of honour and rank connected with this; although under the covering of their hypocrisy nothing existed but spiritual death! (Afterwards in Matt. xxiii. 23, 27, this becomes the

was not equally honoured. These two words are not to be so rigorously distinguished; as we have already remarked in Vol. ii.

[1] The man means to say—That touches *us* with them (a soft way of saying—particularly)—for we furnish the Pharisees with their *theory*, which it is our office to sustain. Is all our glorious learning nought, or of evil? The Lord answers at first by merely placing them also on a level with the others; but then in ver. 52 follows the specific portion of these theorists.

fifth and seventh woe, but the intermediate one here has already there been singled out in vers. 6, 7.) We see that the whole has its own connection and orderly procedure here, though a different one from that other; for, it is the marvellous nature of these pregnant utterances of the Lord that they may be strung on a variety of threads. Now, when the hardy lawyer appropriated to himself what had been said, although the Lord had only named the Pharisees,—a marvellously daring acknowledgment of a smitten conscience, which straightway complains that this charge inculpates us also—these lawyers receive their portion over and above, still heavier than the former, though not exempting them from the application of that likewise. We see that the *wisdom of God* in Jesus (ver. 49) finds it now reasonable and right to cast down the presumptuous wickedness of sinners with especial severity; in order to deprive them of every reason for thinking that He did not penetrate their hearts, or was afraid before them. And our critical prudence should also rest contented with that. The *Pharisees*, as such, had been previously described *in themselves*, according to their own spirit and character; the νομικοί, on the other hand, the *teachers* of others, receive their three woes on account of their *dealing with the people*. First we have, once more, the universal and comparatively gentle description:—laying burdens upon others, which themselves not even touched! ver. 46. (Matt. xxiii. 4.) And, as this would instantly place them in humiliating comparison with the ancient prophets, the holy and anointed messengers of God, vers. 47, 48, quickly pursue the topic, and with words which in Matt. xxiii. constitute the summing up of the seven woes into an eighth. Similarly, the charge against the generation, and its condemnation, follow in vers 49–51, just as they follow there in vers. 34–36. But then, as these words are not a concluding and farewell discourse, it is quite natural (we might say, necessary) that the close here should turn back as we find it does:—the third woe, ver. 52 (analogous to the first, ver. 46; there, however, concerning the law, but now also concerning the way of penitence and salvation in order to the εἰσέρχεσθαι into the kingdom of heaven), first describes in all its enormity the character of these lawyers, as being fatal to their own wellbeing, and ruinous to others. This *last* woe of our present discourse

becomes afterwards in Matt. xxiii. the *first:* for the Lord seems to recall then His former words, and, beginning again what is in part the same discourse, commences at the point where He had ended before.

Vers. 39–41. The νῦν at the beginning can scarcely be made to indicate, as many think, that this is a fragment of a longer discourse unskilfully extracted, the true commencement of which is not given: it is much more in keeping to regard it as a הִנֵּה which makes severe allusion to what was just then occurring.[1] The Lord sets out from that which met His eyes at the repast, beginning at once—"I mark, indeed, that ye Pharisees are very zealous in washing *the cutside*, whether of the cups and platters or the *hands* of your own persons; alas, that ye should forget the *inward part*, which is the main concern, the purification of the heart and life!" The connection of His words with the washing of hands, which here gives rise to all, makes it evident that τὸ ἔσωθεν ὑμῶν, hastening as it does to its great object, refers to the individual persons of the Pharisees themselves, who deal with themselves as with their cups and platters (and even the singular here derives significance from this). The τὰ ἐνόντα afterwards has a quite different meaning; and τὸ ἔσωθεν ὑμῶν instead of αὐτῶν can neither be explained by—"the contents of the vessels belonging to you," nor "the manner and way in which they are handled and used in the house!" The following verse is very commonly regarded as a question, ὁ ποιήσας being referred to God; so Meyer corrects the Luth. version—"Did not He that made that which is without, make that which is within also?" The inference drawn from this—Is not this also to be purified before Him who is the *Creator* of the soul or the inner man? seems to us to be very inapplicable here. We cannot see how the observation, which holds good of every possible thing, and of much that is different within and without, that the inward and outward part *originate from the same Creator*, should be supposed to lead to the conclusion—that therefore they necessarily belong together! Still less can we understand why just

[1] This explanation pleases us, at least better than Lange's subtle interpretation, which goes at once too far—*Even now*, with all the wickedness of your inward parts, ye care so much about external purification!

here the reference to the ποιήσας should be introduced as a reason, since He most certainly did not create the *unclean* inner man as such; and we think Luther's original text more conformable to the sense, although he uses a paraphrase which gives up the literal words. The significant parallel, Matt. xxiii. 26, which runs—*Cleanse* first that which is within, that the outside *may be clean also!* shows us that ποιεῖν here signifies *purgare*, a meaning which is very suitable and alone gives the sense in its simplicity. The lexicographers vindicate this use of the word, which is found also in later languages; deducing it from the placing any thing in a certain condition, making it what it should be, thus, according to circumstances, cleansing, putting right, etc. Wahl and Schöttgen cite, particularly, 2 Sam. xix. 24. Thus the clause is a simple position, telling these *fools* the plain truth which they had altogether forgotten—that He who has done all to, or purified that which is without, has not *thereby* put to rights or made clean that which is within; but has that much harder work yet to do![1] As it respects ver. 41, we can, once more, scarcely understand why most expositors are so earnest in protesting against the supposition of an *ironical* meaning (Erasmus so understood it, and many afterwards, among whom we may mention Lightfoot and Kuinoel); for we find it impossible, as Schleiermacher also does, to understand it otherwise.[2] Is not the severity of scorn perfectly in harmony with the tone of the whole discourse, and does not this re-appear most decidedly in vers. 47, 48? Can we suppose that *here*, confronting these Pharisees, the Lord would positively lay down this clause con-

[1] Alford wonders that I adopt this view, which gives "the most frigid sense imaginable;" but our views must differ,—the reference to the Creator seems to me indefinitely general and almost meaningless.

[2] Even Neander inclines to the ironical meaning: "But, on the other hand, where Christ employs this mode of teaching (giving a specific instead of a general precept), the peculiar *kind* of special injunction that He gives is always determined by the character of His hearers; and *almsgiving* would have been an inapt injunction to *Pharisees*, who, as we learn from the Sermon on the Mount, made great show and display thereof."—"If the words were not spoken ironically, it must seem strange that Christ, whose design was to aim at the *disposition of the heart*, should have laid down anything so easily perverted into opus operatum." And in this we quite concur.

cerning the meritoriousness of almsgiving, which, however correctly to be understood in itself, ever *presupposes* a right spirit of apprehension, or else is fatally abused? This would be the only explicit doctrine and exhortation in the whole discourse, which else contains nothing but condemnation—and this is reason enough, in fact, for understanding it otherwise. The Pharisees assuredly gave away alms enough, as we know, and might, consequently, have been altogether unable to understand the Lord. But, in fact, they understood Him much better than His modern expositors; for, the giving alms of the contents of their platters,[1] and then saying "now all is pure, all is right!" *was just their manner.* This the Lord can only be regarded as now reproving; it is impossible that He could be recommending it in earnest *to them,* for they would have mocked Him with the answer—O Master, we *give,* indeed, diligently and plentifully enough! It would be like saying to the feasters at our modern free-mason and other feasts—Let the poor have a collection, and the matter is pure and sanctified! No, the Lord would here say to the Pharisees—Your custom to purify *robbery* by *almsgiving,* touches only that which is *outward,* as ye hypocrites well know! He expresses this scornfully in the Imperative (which should not be advanced as an argument against the ironical sense), and His well known application is—Do this as much as ye may, ye will not thereby avoid the woe! The καὶ ἰδοὺ (corresponding with the νῦν at the beginning) speaks also for this view; as well as the καθαρὰ ὑμῖν ἐστι, which indicates the condemned, facile method of their cleansing *everything* in their conduct—*before your eyes;* with which, finally, as a final evidence, the following Ἀλλ' οὐαὶ ὑμῖν comes into sharp contrast. This ἀλλά would have, indeed, no meaning, if the previous clause did not refer to a *false* justification on the part of the Pharisees. Neander says correctly—"You cannot with this mock piety satisfy the law of God, and escape His judgments; but *woe unto you!*" Therefore we have not here, as in Matt.

[1] Τὰ ἐνόντα (Vulg. quod superest) is obviously no more than ἐκ τῶν ἐνόντων; it requires no explanation, that all was not to be given. Morus adds—quantum fieri potest. We cannot understand how this ἐνόντα (as Neander thinks) should be applied, like ἔσωθεν previously (as contrasted with ἔξωθεν, ver. 39), to the inner being of the man.

xxiii. 23, express mention of their passing over the exhibition of the ἔλεος towards their neighbours.

Ver. 49. The remainder of the discourse has been already explained upon Matt. xxiii., only that "the words of the wisdom of God" in this verse demand some comment. Hereafter the Lord places Himself, at His public and solemn concluding discourse in the temple, openly before them thus—*Behold I send!* placing Himself in the stead of the God who gave them prophets and preachers; but now, at the table of a Pharisee, such dignified *majesty* in His words would have been unsuitable: He therefore veils it, as it were, in the spirit which we have before, in Vol. ii., exhibited as the significant distinction between the earlier and the later discourse. It scarcely needs proof that this entire sentence, which continues through vers. 50, 51, and closes with Λέγω ὑμῖν, can be no quotation of any passage in Scripture;—though this strange opinion has been advanced, and Morus speculates on a lost book with this title. The Lord refers, immediately and first, to the wisdom of God, who sends that wisdom which manifested itself in its messengers, and which was justified in its believing children against all unbelievers; and probably not without allusion to ch. vii. 35.[1] He then places this wisdom, which sendeth the genuine prophets and messengers from age to age with the simple truth, in marked contrast with the blind scribes who boast themselves in their useless and unused key of *knowledge*.[2] But, finally, it is very plain (as the parallel in Matt. xxiii., which must be retrospectively brought to explain this, shows) that He signifies Himself in the undertone of this name; for not merely in Him is the wisdom of *God* to be heard in a higher sense than in Solomon (ver. 31, in this chapter); but He is Himself, as all true Scribes in Israel might understand, as the only-begotten Son of God, the personal, hypostatical Wisdom, which *speaketh* in all the prophets and in all the bearers of Divine revelation—see Prov. i. 20; viii. 1, 12, 22–31. Thus

[1] This view, even if we look no further, sufficiently explains the expression on our Lord's lips. With any transformation of the "citation" according to subsequent Christian phraseology (Twesten and Neander) we can have nothing to do.

[2] We have already shown, on Matt. xxiii. 13, that the knowledge is itself the key.

does the Lord "utter His eternal dicta in the style of an ancient prophecy," as von Gerlach says, holding fast the truth.[1] One might almost say that the Lord in His passing use of this expression would give the true key for understanding the *Book* of *Wisdom*, developed as it is from canonical elements, containing the purest gnosis of Israelitish faith, and stretching forth, as it does, in its principles, towards the New Testament revelation. But this we would only throw out in passing, and not for captious application.

THE DISCIPLES WARNED AGAINST HYPOCRISY, THE FEAR OF MAN, AND LITTLENESS OF FAITH.

(Luke xii. 1–12 [Matt. xvi. 6; x. 26–33; xii. 31, 32; x. 19, 20].)

These are no other than sayings which were uttered, according to St Matthew, on an earlier occasion, and in another connection, some of which also appear again in St Luke's Gospel, as ch. viii. 17; xxi. 14, 15. The Evangelist here binds them together as a connected discourse spoken in immediate connection with the preceding. The people had in the meantime crowded together in unwonted numbers;[2] whether surrounding the Lord for His protection, as it were, against the excited and wrathful Scribes and Pharisees, ch. xi. 53, 54,—or waiting without in eager anxiety for the breaking up of the repast,—or, if that be preferred, accidentally gathered together. In the hearing of these the Lord now utters a discourse, which is strictly related to that immediately preceding, the condemnatory spirit of which it still retains. It is directed to *His disciples*, indeed, yet evidently with a view to its being heard and pondered by the people at large and the Pharisees. He goes on to teach these latter that He feared not to rebuke publicly before the people without, as He had rebuked secretly at their table, the *hypocrisy* which the

[1] The allusion to 2 Chron. xxiv. 19, which Alford lays so much stress upon, seems to us forced and inapplicable, since the question is still about the *wisdom*.

[2] The καταπατεῖν, ver. 1, is hyperbolical; not intimating that they actually trode one upon another.

light of His truth detected (and in which they had invited Him and listened to His words); the poor deceived people, so far as they were disposed to come over to *His* discipleship, He warns against false masters; and, finally, He solaces His disciples' minds in the prospect of the enmity which might be excited against them, reminding them of most appropriate sayings which they had already heard, though they had not yet learned them fully—to wit, that they themselves were called to sustain the same testimony to the truth which He sustained, and with equal warfare and opposition of man. Only guard yourselves against hypocrisy, by contemplating the judgment which will finally make all things manifest, as also by keeping in mind the ever-increasing publicity which will speedily be given to the preaching of all truth! Vers. 1–3. "As My followers, friends, and companions in the office of this testimony, fear not men, but *fear* that true enemy and murderer of souls (see on Matt. x. 28); *trusting* in your God and Father, who numbereth the hairs of your head!" Vers. 4–7. "In order to the compensation in the judgment, the *confessing Me* before men, and not denying, is the great essential; he who commits an offence against Me may find forgiveness, but he who withstands and contradicts the Holy Ghost in His full testimony—ye know what I said once before to these Pharisees concerning that!" Vers. 8–10. (See on Matt. xii. 31.) "Therefore do ye, in the time to come, in direct opposition to the sin *against* the Holy Ghost, place your absolute reliance upon the promised aid which ye shall receive *from* Him." Vers. 11, 12.

Thus far the connection is clear. But when many, after the interruption, vers. 13–21, find in the paragraph vers. 22–59 a continuation of the same connection—that is, of this present warning and instruction to the disciples, we must demur. For, the whole has in itself too general a meaning; nor will the recurrence of such correlative thoughts as we find in ver. 32, *Fear not!* ver. 56, *ye hypocrites!* ver. 51, *divisions*, dispose us to determine that the whole was but one discourse. Thus much, however, remains certain, that our Lord turns once more to His disciples again, while in ver. 54 He appeals to the people at large, reproving their pharisaic thoughts. For the rest, the section vers. 1–12 has for its *leading theme* hypocrisy and the fear

of man. But ver. 15 begins a distinctive warning of another kind, making prominent the difference between *earthly* and *heavenly* thought; *care* for the body and this life, and seeking *treasure in heaven;* Christian *prudence* in regard to the future recompense.

The details have been already expounded. It appears to us certain that πρῶτον in ver. 1 belongs to προσέχετε and not to λέγειν; for this was not the first warning against the Pharisees and their leaven, and any distinction here between a first time now, and a second time to the disciples in ver. 22, seems quite inappropriate. But that sincerity might be called the first thing of all, and, consequently, that the warning against hypocrisy might be introduced with a πρῶτον προσέχετε, is abundantly clear. On vers. 2, 3, consult Vol. i. on the parallel passage, where there are some specific remarks on this of St Luke; and on the speaking in *closets* compare 2 Kings vi. 12. Further, it is to be observed on ver. 4, that the Lord designedly says, in special confidence and with universal invitation,—*ye My friends!* Ver. 10 is so strictly connected with vers. 8, 9, that it tends to mitigate the threatening against denial of Himself, and limits the utmost severity of retribution to the final persistency in self-willed and inveterate sin. In vers. 11, 12, there is opposed to this the simple, unfearing, confident obedience under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost; intermediate thoughts may have been omitted, since the record only makes prominent the significant sayings as they recurred here on a specific occasion.

THE PEOPLE AND THE DISCIPLES WARNED AGAINST VARIOUS FOLLY. COVETOUSNESS, AND EARTHLINESS OF MIND; LACK OF WATCHFULNESS AND FIDELITY IN THE DISCIPLES; FOLLY OF THE PEOPLE IN NOT OBSERVING THE PRESENT DAY OF GRACE, AND THINKING OF THE COMING JUDGMENT.

(Luke ch. xii. 14–59 [Matt. vi. 25–33, vi. 19–21, xxiv 42–51, x. 34–36, xvi. 2, 3, v. 25, 26].)

After a specific parable, occasioned by an inopportune and foolish appeal, we have here various sayings which, with some

few additions, had been either spoken earlier, or were subsequently repeated. Not that St Luke or his "reporter" has inserted a portion of the Sermon on the Mount; nor that St Matthew, in ch. xxiv. and in his Sermon, has borrowed various sayings from this place. These parallels between the two Evangelists should simply impress upon our minds the conviction, that our Lord ofttimes did what every diligent teacher of unapt scholars must constantly do—repeat in His condescending patience the words which only by incessant repetition could be eternally imprinted on the minds of those who heard them. We cannot see, for our own part, why this *could* not have been the case in "longer discourses, which correspond word for word"—for those longer discourses would, of course, be less likely to be understood, at one hearing, than the shorter proverbial sayings; and precisely *such*, therefore, we should expect to find repeated. The idea which lies at the root of all such critical suspicion is this, that the Lord must necessarily have been more solicitous about the originality of His own teaching than the benefit of those whom He taught. This may be the case with us presumptuous mortals, but with respect to Him let it be for ever rejected as utterly unworthy; and let every man reflect how, in his own experience, the most profoundly pondered thoughts adhere longest to the memory in the very words which expressed them first. All these difficulties will then vanish.

The man in the company, ver. 13, had been a foolish listener; and while our Lord had been speaking of matters infinitely momentous, and finally, concerning the Holy Spirit, *he* had been thinking of *his own*, and not the heavenly, inheritance. He now breaks out into an interruption concerning a strife between himself and another, touching matters of personal property. The man of God had shown himself so fearless and impartial in his contest with the Pharisees, that this injured person feels disposed to select him for an arbitrator between himself and his elder brother, who, being in possession and in administration, refused to give his younger brother his rightful portion.[1] Now this singular and inopportune appeal itself betrayed the improper zeal of his πλεονεξία in a matter which might indeed be just;

[1] Braune thinks it probable that he wanted to share equally with his elder brother; but we see no reason for this.

the Lord therefore condemns, and this was His own only function, both the man in particular and the people in general, for the folly of such entire devotion to worldly good. When He turns in ver. 22 to the disciples again, He does not take up the interrupted thread of His former discourse where ver. 12 left it; but adheres to the subject which this interruption had introduced, though not without retaining some echoes of what He had before been saying. The fundamental idea, which binds all together down to ver. 59, lies in the Ἄφρον of ver. 20. The Lord rebukes the folly of the mind which fixes its thoughts upon the *earthly* instead of upon the heavenly, upon the present life instead of upon the future and its concomitant reckoning before God; warning the *people* as well as the *disciples* against it with profound earnestness. First comes the *people's* warning against covetousness, with a reference to being rich towards God. Vers. 15–21. Then follows a warning to the *disciples*, arising out of the former, against heathenish worldly thought and care; a warning which in their case would naturally lead to more specific inculcation of the heavenly spirituality of mind which became *their* character, and of that *watchfulness* and *fidelity* which was demanded of them in the dispensation and use of the *gifts of grace* intrusted to them. Vers. 22–53. (How the concluding words from ver. 49 are connected with this, we shall see in the sequel.) Finally, our Lord returns to the *people*, and addresses to them a warning which adheres to the fundamental idea, cautioning them against the *folly* (learned of their misleaders, ver. 1) of abusing and neglecting the day of grace; of forgetting and putting from them the consideration of the judgment; and of failing to avert that condemnation which it was still in their power to avert. Vers. 54–59. Thus, the whole discourse sets out from the wretched *folly* of *men* in thinking to fill the soul with great store of abundance;—proceeding to the corresponding *folly* among His poor disciples, in neglecting the kingdom of God in their care for food and clothing;—penetrating still deeper in the exhibition of that last folly of the *servants* in not preparing for their Lord's judgment;—and returning back again to the most universal *ground-folly* underlying all, viz., the *refusing to mark*, in spite of reason and conscience, what God is now offering to man's *soul* for its satisfaction, and what He will one day require of that soul.

Disciples and people are thus interchangeably addressed; they are distinguished one from the other, and yet so fundamentally blended that each party would hear only the same things said, according to its own specific point of view.

Ver. 14. Assuredly it is not without reproving indignation that the ἄνθρωπε suddenly begins; yet not repelling him as a stranger who concerned Him not, for He gives him much better than he asks. Its meaning is—"This appeal of thine is altogether *human* in its earthliness of spirit! Art thou bent upon going to law with thy brother about mammon—*in relation to that* I can help neither thee nor any other man, for to this end I did not come into the world, and have not been commissioned of My Father! Dost thou not yet know Him better, whom thou namest διδάσκαλος? I am not appointed by God or man to be a δικαστής in general (judge or arbiter, Acts vii. 27, 35), or a μεριστής in particular; My kingdom is not of this world, and I meddle not with any earthly judgment or temporal business, so that the enemies of the truth to which I bear witness can never say of Me what was there said of Moses." (The form of the expression evidently points to that passage, which Stephen afterwards referred to.) While the Lord thus declines what did not befit His mission, He acknowledges, at the same time, by His κατέστησε, the just prerogative of those who were *appointed* to that end. The word and the example of the Master is of perpetual obligation upon His servants too, warning them ever against injuring the efficiency of their spiritual function by mixing up with it things quite foreign to its character; for the rest, however, 1 Cor. vi. 1–6 is by no means here contradicted, for that which did not become our Lord in relation to "men" without, for whom He had matter of quite different judgment, does strictly and absolutely become *brethren* in relation one to another. *If* Peter and Andrew had not yet left all, but had been at contention about some portion of their possessions (which He might have permitted them still to retain), He would in such a case—unimaginable, however, in itself—have rebuked the contention, and have interposed between "His friends," instead of referring them to any court of human judicature. The ἐφ' ὑμᾶς must be strongly emphasized in strict connection with the ἄνθρωπε.

Ver. 15. And He said *unto them;* that is, not simply to the two brethren (for who can tell if the other was present?), but to all the people. He includes all who were held by the same carnal mind as this one; and, administering *His* office, involving a much more weighty condemnation, He warns them against covetousness; employing a popular parable, which, preceded by the most definite expression of His *teaching* (ver. 15), is followed by the most definite expression of His *warning* (ver. 21). But the instruction at the first stands only as the ground of a warning; while the concluding warning points also to a correlative promise. *Take heed* and beware (parallel with κρίνετε ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν afterwards, ver. 57) of *that* πλεονεξία which, alas, adheres to and endangers all; that foolish lust of having much, and of having more—that evil spirit and disposition which reduces all your otherwise lawful vindication of your right and of your property, into mere unrighteousness! This is the beginning; and at the end we have reference to the *being rich in God*, without which no earthly possessions can save the soul from destruction. The *doctrine*, which gives the reason for the ὁρᾶτε in the ὅτι, is by no means the utterance of an entirely new truth; it is no more than the simplest expression of a conviction entertained by all men everywhere, established both by external and internal experience; the misapprehension and perversion of which, therefore, can only be condemned as wilful blindness, and sinful folly. The concise expression of the German Bible—*Niemand lebt davon, dass er viele Güter hat!*—a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth—perfectly exhibits the obvious meaning, but does not correspond with the more profound order of the original words. That order has been found a difficulty; and some have adopted another reading,[1] while others have darkened the thought by a perverted construction. It appears to us inconceivable that ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων should belong to περισσεύειν, from which it is so far separated,—partly on account of the strangeness of the construction, and partly because of the Infinitive being followed by ἐκ with its object; and therefore it is wrong to translate—His life doth not consist in this, that a man hath a superabundance *of* or *in* his

[1] That is, adopting αὐτῷ instead of αὐτοῦ; but this is not sufficiently established, so that we adhere to the usual reading as the more simple.

goods! Schleiermacher's view (following the interpolation of Michaelis ἀλλ' ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων): "Assuredly, a man must live of the goods or of the bread *which he now hath*, but the περισσεύειν, the having more than is absolutely necessary, is of no avail to him"—is equally incorrect as it regards the text, and very much more so as it regards the matter; indeed, it altogether distorts and ruins the profound doctrine taught. Most certainly our Lord, who uttered the great truth of Matt. iv. 4, could not have designed to teach anything so doubtful as that anything creaturely is necessary to a man, *whereof* his life must consist: what He here teaches is essentially the same as His word in the wilderness. But He proceeds from that which is altogether evident, that man does not live of superfluity, and strengthens that assertion by further denying that a man's life consists in anything that he may have already; so that instead of the ἀλλά which they would interpolate, "not even" would be more appropriately supplied. This alone seems to bring out the fulness of meaning:—The life of a man does not depend upon his having abundance, upon (so that it might be said to come from) the good things which he already possesseth. Compare the warning of Ecclus. v. 1 (followed as it is by a saying which our Lord here refers to)—Set not thine heart upon thy χρήματα, and say not, αὐτάρκη μοι ἐστι. The thorough understanding of the sentiment is developed in a triple progression. Let the *abundance* be first emphasized; and we are constrained to confess that the having superfluity is not the life, since the man cannot consume all that is in his barns. Then it must be noted, that we do not, properly speaking, live of that which *we have*, be it little or much;[1] thou dost not live one day longer, because thou hast bread for another day (vers. 19, 20), but rather thou must continue in life if thy bread is to be eaten by thee. Finally, let us seize the full truth which is intimated in ἡ ζωή:—God alone gives and sustains man's *life* in

[1] That ὑπάρχοντα is always *superfluous possession*, as Richter's Hausbibel says, we cannot admit; but in most passages plain evidence is found that it is the general idea for the property which a man has. But comp. ver. 33, and then, *e.g.*, Matt. xix. 21; Acts iv. 32; Luke xiv. 33, xix. 8; Heb. x. 34. The expression which most fully corresponds to it is *provision*, without direct reference to little or much: comp. τὰ παρόντα, Heb. xiii. 5.

every sense; as his lower, bodily life, so also the true life of his *soul*, its rest, its confidence, the satisfaction of its every need, now and for ever. That this is the essential undertone of our Lord's instruction, its exposition in the parable will most clearly show.

Vers. 16, 17. A man, a rich man, to whom the περισσεύειν is not wanting, must miserably die and perish in the sudden horror of night; his *foolish security* fails to assure his life; he *has* more than he can well take care of, but will hold fast all, and solace his soul in the thought of ample provision for the future. But how awfully is the case reversed! He *is* rich already, and is ever becoming richer; his great field (χώρα instead of χωρίον, a strictly classical distinction) has yielded largely in a year of blessing and fruitfulness. The Lord selects the most innocent method of acquiring riches, that which most obviously tended to lead the mind constantly to thankful acknowledgment of God; and thus makes this wretched harvest-joy all the more frightful, and all the more impressive a warning to every man. He thus designedly varies the expression of Ecclus. xi. 18, where an example is given of one who was πλουτῶν ἀπὸ προσοχῆς καὶ σφιγγίας αὐτοῦ, by strenuous pains and parsimony. The fruits of the earth furnish also the most striking and apposite illustration of the truth which our Saviour enforces, since it is most obvious that the man cannot eat the whole himself. But this fool in his infatuation does not mark that; his τί ποιήσω, with its unhappy answer, is much worse than that of the worldling who was at least wise in his generation, Luke xvi. 3, 4. He does not say, with an earnest meaning—What *should* I do? but—What *shall* I do? At best it was—What should, what can I do with it—to store it up in the most effectual manner for myself? Possibly his neighbour's land had not borne with equal plenteousness; certainly there were landless people enough around him who in their poverty would have eased him of his care for the superabundance, and would have well known where to bestow it. The law of Moses, too, reminded him of these by all its provisions for the poor in connection with the gleaning, the sabbath year, and so forth. But it does not occur to this man that *his own belly* was too small for all his abundance; instead of that he only thinks of his insufficient barns; and the only aim of all his prudent craft is—to *collect together*, and be-

stow safely, *my* fruits, *all* which has been produced for *me* in my land! This is a man like a hamster.

Vers. 18, 19. His riches now cause him much care and disquietude, before his soul can peacefully eat and drink and take content. (Ps. xxxix. 6.) As he knows only the pains of gathering, nothing of the joy of giving; as he is only troubled about the *ποῦ* and *ἐκεῖ* of a stately and secure place of heaping up; his abundant harvest only brings him much vain expense of time and money. *Καθελῶ*! This is the scheme of his prudence; and the great work begins with the *destruction* and pulling down of all his *ἀποθῆκαι* (not merely caves, therefore). If any one spoke to him about it, he would probably in hypocrisy and thanklessness *say* something about the "blessing of God;" but what *he said to himself* runs quite differently. He calls it *τὰ γενήματά μου*, thinks only of the field and its produce instead of thinking on God; rests in the *μοῦ* (Ger. trans. is quite correct—*mir* gewachsen, grown *unto me*) without any thought of his neighbour. As Göthe says: "Im Frühling denkt gleich der steife Philister: Das ist für mich und meine Geschwister; Unser Hergott ist so gnädig heuer, Hätt' ich's doch schon in Fach und Scheuer!" Then will he say—These are *my goods!* Twice, in designed irony, *ἀγαθά*: not merely as a general term like *ἀποθῆκαι*; but this deeper word is used instead of *χρήματα, ὑπάρχοντα* and the like, in order to intimate more expressly the unspeakable folly which takes no account of the true *ἀγαθόν*. *And then*, when the building is done? Now shall his soul find rest: *ἀναπαύου* points to leisure and repose—*φάγε, πίε* to ample enjoyment, not without *luxury*—*εὐφραίνου*, finally, not simply to content and merriment again, but to abiding repose in false *confidence*, as Luther has it—Be of good cheer, there is no more need! The ease he might have much more easily obtained before; and, whether rich or not rich, might have eaten and drunken. If we go on to ask him, once and again,—*and then?* When the years have all revolved, and time with thee is ended,—*what follows?* So far onwards he *will* not carry his thought, and the foolish colloquy with his own soul dispels and banishes all such reflections. "Soul, thou *hast*"—is it really and truly *Having?* Much *goods*—true goods indeed? *Laid up*—actually insured against robbery, fire, and what else? For many *years*—but hast thou a

store of years, too, laid up in thy barns? His folly was fourfold. —that he forgot the Giver; appropriated all to himself; counted these things the food of his *soul;* and thought not of the daily possibility of death. Thus did his soul repose in mammon, as if that was the security of his life! But his poor soul is not at rest, and is not full of confidence; hence he must exhort and encourage it. The Lord makes evident reference in these piercing sayings to Ecclus. xi. 17–19[1] (see in the Greek), which entire passage lays the foundation of this parable. Such people think of their souls in the spirit of Wisd. ii. 1–9, indeed scarcely going so far; but they shall to their terror find out what the soul of a man really is and must ever be.

Ver. 20. *God* said—how impressively is this contrasted with his words just before spoken to himself! And *unto him!* which was either a forewarning presentiment of coming death, or may only mean—God said unto him by the fact, *God's decree was*—Thou must die! Both harmonise together; for the reference to *this night* (instead of the many years) intimates the former, while the ἀπαιτοῦσιν brings death into the immediate present. That which God says, *is done!* "O thou *fool,* who didst forget both Me and thyself, with all the wisdom of thy thrifty plans!" Comp. Ps. xlix. 11 and Jer. xvii. 11. Thy soul is *required*—not by a gracious summons; but God, the Lord and Judge of thy life, plucks it from thee, and hurries it away. (Job xxvii. 8, יִשָּׂל which does not stand there for יִשָּׂאל.) But God sendeth to that end His messengers, ἀπαιτοῦσιν being, in a passage so significant, scarcely to be taken impersonally (comp. ver. 48);—*they,* whom thou, O fool, also wert ignorant of, My ministers appointed to that end, see Job xxxiii. 22. We are taught again in Luke xvi. 22 that angels have to do with the dying of mortals. They require thy soul *of thee,* that soul which thou didst shut up in thy barns, which thou didst think happy, and which, belonging to Me and not to thee, thou hast corrupted and ruined! Thou art responsible to Me for it; comp. once more, the expression of Wisd. xv. 8, τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς ἀπαιτηθεὶς χρέος. The curtain falls upon that other "life" which awaits such a soul; and the discourse returns back to the goods and possessions, in all their

[1] So that this passage is convincing proof that He sometimes allusively referred to the Apocrypha.

insufficiency to help—"which thou hast *provided;* provided, indeed, and collected together, but not for thyself, even as thy fruits did not grow for thee. *Whose* shall they be, in opposition to all the *I*, and the *My*, and the *having*, of *thy* vain words?"

Ver. 21. Most highly emphatic is the fearful reference to eternity in—*So is it!* expressed by a simple οὕτως. The following words resolve themselves into a twofold contrast. The mere θησαυρίζειν implies a labour and a care which after all leaves the gathered goods in the barn *out of myself;* πλουτεῖν, on the contrary, is an actual condition and possession of good; and the ordinary phrase πλούσιος used to designate this man in the beginning is now corrected—he was not in a true sense πλουτῶν. He who is truly rich, has his life from and in that which he possesses—and what kind of possession is that? The δόσις κυρίου which remaineth with the godly, according to the profound parallel which Ecclus. xi. 17 once more affords. A man, however, can *possess* his God, strictly speaking, only when God possesses the soul which belongs to Himself, surrounds it, pervades it, and takes it into His own fulness; hence it is very significantly said πλουτῶν εἰς θεόν, not to be merely translated by *era*, or as if the gathering *for* God were spoken of. The true πλουτῶν believes, lives, loves, loses, and prays himself *into his God*, and thus he most superaboundingly finds himself again; but he who heaps up treasures ἑαυτῷ, obtains nothing whatever for *himself;* and, more than that, loses himself and his soul to his rigid creditor. Thus *die* and perish many in the midst of their great possessions, instead of deriving from them life! Observe how profoundly the second contrast, between ἑαυτῷ and εἰς θεόν, brings out the difference between the real and the specious riches. And, finally, we should carry our thoughts beyond the *external* application of the parable, which remains in itself a *similitude*, and understand it of the self-seeking appropriation and heaping up of wise spiritual goods, stores of knowledge, virtue, and godliness (in which even the experiences of regeneration may again wither away). This truth, however, only hovers over our Lord's words, to be discerned by our thoughtful pondering; it was scarcely intended to be taught in the present connection, and will be further enforced upon chap. xvi. 19.

Vers. 22–30. How appositely does the Lord now repeat to

His disciples this section of the Sermon on the Mount! He perfectly well knew what He had then said, but the *μαθηταί* who now surrounded Him (never the Twelve merely, or any fixed and permanent circle), had probably not heard it from His lips;—and wherefore should we hesitate to think that He would trouble Himself to repeat it in their hearing? The great contrast—the *heaping up treasures*, and not being *rich in God*—leads by immediate transition to the exhortation, "Take heed, ye My disciples; *ye* should be rich in God, and not heap up treasures; that is, *ye cannot serve God and Mammon!*" Thus was Matt. vi. 24, brought to remembrance; but as most of our Lord's disciples were *poor* and not rich, here follows, as there, the warning against anxious *care* about the sustentation of life, and the clothing of the body. For it is the self-same heathenish worldly spirit which is both in covetousness and in care; it presents in both cases the same contrast with a believing contentment in what the Lord gives now, and will continue to give. Μὴ *μεριμνᾶτε τῇ ψυχῇ ὑμῶν*—here at first the lower meaning of *ψυχή* and *ζωή* is taken up; but it does not therefore follow that in the previous parable *only* this meaning was intended. This time the *ravens* are mentioned, ver. 24; not so much as birds of prey, useless and despised of men, but because of the proverbial use to which they had been put,—God caring for their forsaken young. (Job xxxviii. 41; Ps. cxlvii. 9.) We noted in vol. i. that *ἡλικία*, vers. 25, 26, can refer only to the *length of life;* and this is confirmed here by the reference to the fool who was compelled to depart the self-same night. Τὰ *λοιπά* indicates everything besides this *ἐλάχιστον*; if it is not in our power to retain the spirit when God taketh it away (Eccles. viii. 8), even for a span of time, assuredly it is not in our power to provide for the entire *necessity of life*, in its clothing and nourishment (*τὰ πάντα*, Acts xvii. 25), which is to be understood as necessarily to be provided by Him who gave the life itself. See in Vol. i., our comment on the *μετεωρίζεσθε*, which here responds to the *ἀναπαύου* of ver. 19. Even the heathen can recognize it as a naturally evident truth, that man doth not live of that which is in his hand, and that the life is more than meat; but the believing appeal to the Father who knoweth and who supplieth their need, and their seeking His kingdom, gives a new

and higher assurance and ground of argument to the *children of God.*

Vers. 31, 32. These consequently receive, from this point onwards, directions as to the disposition of mind which becomes *them;* in contradistinction to the covetousness and care against which the Lord had warned them. That disposition is *heavenly-mindedness*, which fixes the eye and the heart only upon the kingdom of God, the gift of the Father (vers. 31–34)—*Watchfulness* as the true *prudence* and care, to preserve this inheritance and gift (vers. 35–40)—consequently *fidelity* in the dispensation of the intrusted possessions of grace (increasing by being dispersed), which forms the final and perfect contrast with the *συνάγειν τὰ ἀγαθὰ εἰς ἀποθήκας* (vers. 42–48), persisting in unwearied *warfare* with the world (vers. 49–53). Down to ver. 34 we have still repetitions of the Sermon; although altering the connection of the words as they are found there, and adding a sentence, ver. 32, which so aptly completes the meaning of ver. 31, that we could not avoid observing, in Vol. i., that probably St Matthew had omitted it there. It is, at any rate, a retrospective allusion to ver. 4. Will He whose merciful good pleasure intends to *give* the kingdom—deny to its heirs their daily bread, and leave His little *flock* to hunger? This expression points obviously to nourishment and sustentation; but the *μὴ φοβοῦ* extends further, and reminds them of the enemies who threatened their life, the wolves of ver. 4. The Lord in His majesty assumes the same tone to His people as Jehovah in the Old Testament, see *e.g.*, Isa. xli. 10–14; but in that He calls it a little flock we have the New Testament assurance added—I am thy true, thy good Shepherd! *Ποίμνιον* or *ποιμένιον* is not in itself a diminutive (as many incorrectly say); but the *μικρόν* is added, for it remains a truth, the remembrance of which should be mingled with all our assurance, that the number of those who aspire to the kingdom of heaven is few in comparison of the many. (Matt. vii. 13, 14.) Not the entire people, called by the name of Israel, receiveth the kingdom, but the little company, now oppressed in its midst! These few are, further, weak and defenceless in themselves, conquering by patience, exalted before God through their humility alone, and reckoned among His people:—hence in Jer. l. 45 (where also עֲצַת יְהוָה

previously) they are called צְעִירֵי הַצֹּאן, and in Zech. xiii. 7, הַצְּעָרִים. It may indeed be assumed that our Lord, alluding to these passages, intended further to intimate by the μικρόν, that they are simply μικροί to whom the great δοῦναι ὑμῖν remains an eternal promise. The ζητεῖν, ver. 31, is no fearful, and restlessly careful pursuit of the kingdom (like the ἐπιζητεῖν of the Gentiles, ver. 30), but the childlike acceptance of the kingdom already given of the Father. Not forgetting with this, however, that it must be our entire and absolute good pleasure to give Him our whole heart; and, for the sake of the treasure in heaven, to renounce and forsake everything earthly, on which the heart's affections might hang.

Vers. 33, 34. That which, in Matt. vi. 19, was merely the prohibition of θησαυρίζειν, appears here more emphatically as a commandment to *sell* τὰ ὑπάρχοντα (ver. 15). As to the meaning of this requirement, see on Matt. xix. 21. We have often seen that selling, and giving *alms* of the produce, is, under certain circumstances, and always according to the measure of superfluity, a duty which must be literally fulfilled; having its deepest meaning, however, in the release of the heart from the devotion to worldly good, and in the subordination of all our substance to the purposes and services of love. The *treasure in the heavens* is the better capital which accumulates through good works wrought in faith and love, as is fundamentally explained in 1 Tim. vi. 17–19; the title of citizenship, and its actual possession in the heavenly kingdom. This is *our* sure and certain personal treasure (ver. 34), in contradistinction to all earthly goods, lent for a season, and in due time to be taken away.

Vers. 35–38. Further and further does the Lord proceed beyond the occasion which gave rise to His discourse; in order to show *to His disciples* what habit of mind must ever be cultivated by them, if they would attain unto life:—anticipating parables, which, as St Matthew gives them to us, have their most appropriate place at the *conclusion* of all His discourses. The preliminary general exhortation, vers. 35, 36, He here grounds upon a promise to the faithful, vers. 37, 38, and warning to those who forget the end and aim of all, vers. 39, 40. The essential requisites are *watching* and *working*, both in their union and mutual influence. The burning *lights* (a slight prelude of Matt.

xxv. 1) are the hearts or eyes fixed in the simplicity of love and faith upon the Lord; the clear and unqualified aim of the whole soul, in the light of life, which thinks of nothing but eternal life—see further on Matt. vi. 22, 23.[1] The girded *loins* correspond here to the whole body or conversation there; pointing to zeal and diligence in good works, in connection with simplicity of the inward spirit:—a figure very natural and frequent where flowing garments were worn, as *e.g.*, Jer. i. 17; and referred also to the inner man, 1 Pet. i. 13: Eph. vi. 14.[2] But here the burning of the lights, and the girding of the loins for action, are already presupposed; and the exhortation runs—Relax not the girdle of your diligence, suffer not your lights to be extinguished, until your Lord cometh! And now there is a transition from the Father in heaven to Christ, who is the Shepherd of His flock, the Lord of His servants, the Bridegroom of His faithful ones—preparing for them a marriage-feast in the bliss of eternal fellowship with Himself. All these several presentations and aspects of the same truth are concisely blended together, one running into the other in a manner which presupposed among His immediate disciples a prepared intelligence; and that the Lord Himself is speaking out of the amplitude and depth of His stores of instruction for His chosen people. Therefore the ἀναλύειν ἐκ τῶν γάμων must be understood of a *feast* generally (Vol. ii.), after which the Lord requires the attendance and service of His servants; yet not without an intimation in the background to the effect that it is no less than a marriage-feast. The ἐκ, which is here in apparent contrast with Matt. xxv., maintains its specific significance when we remember that this marriage-feast begins in its glorious preparation long before the consummation of its perfect joy; that it is, in a certain sense, celebrated already in heaven, from which the Lord comes back to His waiting servants. He would only find them

[1] The plural *lights*, which simply belongs to the plural address, has been made by Braune to indicate "the several energies of body and soul;" but this is a very inapposite idea, for each individual has but one light,—one aim, one eye, one heart.

[2] Lisco's negative idea, that of removing all obstacles, is very impoverished. There is in the expression the strong positive notion of readiness to all earnest work.

waiting and watching; having sustained the test, they shall be servants no longer, but shall all together be translated into the wedding-guests of the superabundantly merciful Lord; and then, more than that, become the Bride of His love and His joy! Yet does the majesty and the holy righteousness of their Lord require that they approve their worthiness, by faithfully watching awhile for Him, that when He cometh and knocketh, they may εὐθέως open; for when the hour of decision has come, be it in the second or the third watch (He seems as if waiting Himself!), He waits not a moment longer, not even while the garments are being set in order, or the lights trimmed. Thus *those* servants only are blessed, whom their Lord shall find watching in *longing* and patience;[1] but they shall be transcendently and inconceivably honoured by their Lord! With a solemn Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν He gives them a promise which we may compare with that glorious one in Rev. iii. 21, scarcely knowing which of them is the greater; and concerning which some one has said—Let no man contemplate it but when clothed in the profoundest humility. As among men a bridegroom might, among his assembled guests, in the fulness of his joy, do them more than the honour absolutely required; and as in the heathen *Saturnalia* the masters were wont to minister to their servants, so will Christ in His own person wait upon us at His heavenly table! If our waiting for His coming has required us in any degree to fast, what abundant compensation for every abstinence is *this* eating and drinking in the kingdom of God! The Lord will, as a servant, *gird Himself* (ver. 35, chap. xvii. 8), will come forth to them in the zeal of His all-devoting love; just as Stephen saw Him *standing up* from His throne to welcome His first beloved martyr. He *hath already* served us, ever since He took upon Him the form of a servant; He is continually serving us in long-forbearance, putting on our garments and washing our feet—else should we find it hard to believe what He here saith. But then at length He will most perfectly *serve* us, pouring out all the long-restrained

[1] Braune beautifully says:—Patience makes longing mighty, gives it strength, and saves it from being overstrained; longing makes patience watchful, and saves it from growing torpid. Without this longing, patience would enervate the servant; without the patience, his longing would fret and corrode him.

fulness of His heart's affection, and giving us the final and most unreserved proofs of His love to His own, as our Shepherd and our *Host;* παρελθών, too, that is, turning to each in the great company, devoting Himself entirely to every individual one. The washing of the feet in John xiii. was a type and earnest of this; even as every renewal of His holy supper is a prelude and prophecy of that heavenly feast (Rev. iii. 20; xix. 9) whereof it is said—Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved! Cant. v. 1.

Vers. 39, 40. See Matt. xxiv. 43, 44. Olshausen very needlessly and incorrectly refers the οἰκοδεσπότης to the representative of all unbelievers, the ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου τούτου; for *this* warning, too, is addressed to the called and believing servants of Christ. The *servant*, as being installed under-lord or οἰκονόμος, ver. 42, is at the same time *master of the house* in his own appointed domain: this is the obvious reason for the change in the expression. The gracious Lord and Bridegroom represents Himself as coming like a *thief* upon the possessor of all false and unwarranted goods, upon him who holds his natural or spiritual possessions in unrighteousness: taking away from the unfaithful and corrupt servants that which He had given them.[1] This it imports you *to know*—such is the fundamental idea of the whole saying as it warns His servants against all ἀφροσύνη.[2]

And now Peter interrupts the Lord by asking Him, whether He spoke these things to them as disciples, or to the whole of the people, as being the covetous sinners upon whom the Judge would come *as a thief*. Many think that He intended to make a distinction between the Twelve and the rest of the disciples, announcing that the honour promised in ver. 37 could only be the prerogative of the Apostles. However, even if "τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην" refers to the entire discourse, and Peter is thinking of a distinction and preference, yet the essential difficulty which occasioned his question could only apply to the last-mentioned and doubtful threatening of vers. 39, 40 (involving a

[1] Thus ver. 39 belongs appropriately here; and is not, as Schleiermacher thinks, an incorrect interpolation.

[2] Not as v. Gerlach would correct the German Trans.—*Das aber wisset ihr ja*;—ye know it, but look well to it. We must admit that the Lord may come to His servants even as a thief.

new similitude of the thief); and the distinction between πρὸς ἡμᾶς and πρὸς πάντας may be most simply referred to the several applications of the Lord's words to the *disciples* or to the *people*, as obviously exhibited in vers. 1, 15, 22, 24. Peter deems the threatening of instant judgment too strong for disciples who had been once made true believers, at least as they seem to be addressed to them preeminently or even exclusively as *servants;* hence he only ventures to ask—Or *even*, or *also*, to all?

Vers. 42–48. The Lord answers only indirectly, giving back the question, and leaving the reply to the consciousness which every one of them had of his own position and state:—"Who then is such?" On the repetition of the whole discourse in Matt. xxiv. 45–51, this same formula is retained in their remembrance, and that deep meaning in it brought out which indeed is not undiscernible here—"*Who then is such?*" This is the true and supremely important question; and not every one even of you, My disciples, can give the joyful response—"I am he, the faithful and prudent *steward!*" The Lord grants to His Apostles that there is a distinction among His servants, that there are many who are set over others; but in the case of all such He only makes their responsibility the more rigorous. We cannot admit, with Braune, that, on account of the people, and to obviate misunderstanding, our Lord only indefinitely explained Himself upon this premature question; to us the indirect answer seems *definite* enough. On the double notion of faithful and wise, see in St Matthew, where the οἰκονόμος is called only a δοῦλος; but here we must regard the οἰκονόμος as the true intermediate idea between the Lord, ver. 39, and the servant, ver. 37. He who is faithful knows and keeps it well in mind, that he is, as a steward, only a more responsible servant, that he must diligently execute all His Lord's commission with respect to His house; the unfaithful steward, on the contrary, plays the master himself. Further, in Matt. xxiv. 48, that *wicked* servant is another than the faithful and wise one; but here, in order to answer the somewhat over-confident question of Peter by a more severe warning, he is the same who has apostatised into a wicked character; for ἐκεῖνος, ver. 45, cannot possibly refer back to the οἰκοδεσπότης of ver. 39, but indicates him who had been set over the men-servants and maidens, over the θεραπείᾳ. Upon the

διχοτομεῖν, as upon all the rest, see our remarks upon St Matthew;—it is obvious that the ἄπιστοι here are those who have been *unfaithful*, but with an intimation that they are to be similarly punished, at least, as those who have been from the beginning *unbelievers*. This is the first answer to the question; then immediately follows a second, more severe;—If ye, My servants and stewards, should prove unfaithful, ye shall be punished not merely like all those who have been called but have refused to obey the call; your punishment shall be all the more severe on account of the graces and gifts which ye have received! This additional clause is peculiar here, and demands a few words of explanation. It is the reverse side of the benediction pronounced in Jno. xiii. 17. The distinction between knowing and not knowing refers, primarily, like the question, ver. 41, to that between the disciples and the people; then, prophetically, to that between Christians and Heathen; further, to Christian teachers more highly instructed and so-called common and ignorant people; and finally, with more and more restriction, to all relations to which it may be applied.[1] Ἑτοιμάσας, without ἑαυτόν, appears to point back to the parable, where those who waited for their Lord were required to have all things *ready* for Him; but in its strict meaning it indicates the preparation of the heart, the readiness of the individual himself; comp. ver. 40, γίνεσθε ἕτοιμοι. Δαρήσεται πολλάς or ὀλίγας (suppl. πληγάς, according to classical usage as pointed out by Grotius), refers to the law of Moses, Deut. xxv. 2, where it was appointed, with typical allusion to a deeper meaning, that the offender should be beaten according to his fault—כִּפְדֵי רִשְׁעָתוֹ בְּמִסְפָּר. The offender also who, μὴ γνούς, is yet not dismissed without punishment, but receives the ὀλίγας, his ignorance being not without its own lesser guilt, is also pretypified in the law of Moses, Lev. v. 17. Even as every natural man should know, even of himself, the righteous requirements of God (see afterwards ver. 57, and comp. Rom. i.

[1] It seems more natural thus to regard the proposition as proceeding from the universal, and applying itself in a more and more restricted sense, than conversely, as Alford says; who regards the saying as in its highest sense applicable to His Apostles and ministers, and having its application gradationally downwards. But the essential truth remains in both cases the same

19, 20, 32, ii. 14, 15, as also Prov. xxiv. 12); so especially must there be presumed in the case of every *servant* called, a certain knowledge of the will of his Lord. If any one has received this in a higher measure than another, and yet has lost it again through the folly of unfaithfulness, or the idleness of neglect, it will not avail him to plead μὴ γνούς before the judgment; that which was given will be rigidly required, of that which was intrusted to him a strict account will be demanded. The position of not knowing, may be attributed to one who has failed through lack of investigation and prayer; though he also is relatively guilty, since the perfect knowledge of his Master's will was within his reach. But it most literally applies in the case of him who knew not, and not through any fault of his own, the specially revealed will of the Lord; who, however, knew enough of it to bring him within the range of responsibility. Hence, to embrace this case with the rest, it is not assumed simply in his guilt that he did not according to his Lord's will, but—that he did commit things worthy of stripes. The concluding sentence assures us generally, that in the preliminary times of doom and severance which will precede the final judgment, the Divine righteousness will admeasure condemnation as well as blessedness, in degrees strictly corresponding to desert.

And now, after having warningly exhorted His own to heavenly-mindedness, watchfulness, and *fidelity*, the Lord proceeds to establish the grounds of this last, in words which He places in close connection with the earlier discourse, vers. 1–4. He refers to the impending *conflict* between His disciples, followers, and confessors, and the opposing world; in order definitively to point out to them how absolutely needful their *fidelity* would be. He first exhibits his own example; His own course through a baptism of sufferings in order to the kindling of the living and life-giving fire; that thus His followers may encourage and strengthen themselves in Him, upon whom so heavy a burden had been laid. He then repeats some part of the instructions given to the Apostles, Matt. x. 34–36; thus taking up the thread of discourse where it had been broken off at ver. 9.

Vers. 49, 50. The meaning of this profound utterance of our Saviour's heart has been almost universally missed, and its force destroyed, by the unwarranted connection which has been estab-

lished between the *fire* and the contention and division mentioned afterwards. That which our Lord declares to be the most essential, unconditional design of His *coming*, before He makes reference to the restraint yet imposed upon Him until it was accomplished; that end which he elsewhere always declares to be to save the world, and which he here so intensely desires to hasten, must necessarily be something essentially good and unmixed with evil, which was to be brought down from heaven *unto the earth*—an intimation this last which must have its force! He places this *heavenly fire* in full contrast with, and opposition to, the waters of His overpowering sufferings which would engulf Him in anguish and death; that fire, consequently, is in itself—just as the Lord longs to see it kindled—by no means "a fire of disquietude, alarm, contention, and great change," not a "distinction of the old, that the new might be established on its ashes"—indeed the *separating* and *purifying* influence of fire (Isa. iv. 4) is certainly not here the first and fundamental idea. The εἰ must certainly be understood as *utinam*, as a particle of desire, like the Heb. אִם; comp. ch. xix. 42, xxii. 42, and often in the Old Test., *e. g.* Josh. vii. 7, Sept. for לוּ.[1] Consequently, this fire, which our Lord would so gladly see burning over all the earth, was not yet burning; His baptism must first be consummated. Contention and persecution of the truth, however, already amply abounded; and that belonged, both in the case of the Forerunner and of His followers, rather to the baptism. What remained, then, to be waited for? What was this fire? The "all-quickening fire," as Novalis correctly says, which is opposed to the waters of death; the fire of the Spirit with which, according to the Baptist's early word, He was to baptize unto a new life; the Pentecostal fire in the pure sense of that word. That is the "fire of divine *love* which the Holy Ghost kindles in

[1] Not with Schleiermacher (and the Eng. and Hebr. Bibles)—"And what will I rather, *if* it be already kindled? Can I change or hinder the necessary course of things?" Neander similarly—"What more do I desire, if it burns? The aim of My operation upon earth is so far attained!" Euthymius: τὶ πλεῖον θέλω ἐὰν ἀνήφθη; τὶ πλεῖον ἀναμένω ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ. But all this is inapplicable; for the Lord, in ver. 50, tells us that this fire does *not yet* burn, He has yet to endure much in order to it. *Anxiety* before it, and *desire* for it, are the complement of each other.

the hearts of all believers," the first traces of which are seen in Luke xxiv. 32, but the flame of which bursts forth in Acts ii.; according to the sentiment of Fricker's precious hymn, which sets the expositors right—"O dass doch bald dein Feuer brennte, du unaussprechlich Liebender!" Most assuredly, when the light of truth becomes the quickening fire of love, it must approve itself to be a purifying, separating element, condemning and putting an end to all false life. But this condition of its operation is brought forward first in ver. 51; the discordant separation is by no means itself the fire, it is only the inevitable method and concomitant of its kindling and spreading; until "His *sacred* flame enlightens the whole of His father's house; the whole wide world being quickened, illumined, warmed, and set on fire of love; all souls universally glowing with the holy influence." The fire of life and love bursts forth out of the deep waters of the Redeemer's bitter crucifixion-baptism! (see on Matt. xx. 22.) Here, as there, the Lord speaks of it as a sacred, mysterious counsel of the Father, to which He Himself, for the sake of the world's salvation, must be subjected; but now there is mingled with it the utterance of a presentient foretaste of the final suffering, of that *anxiety*, now already begun, and which was to be consummated in such profound anguish. This is a most impressive testimony, not only to a *passio inchoata* before the *passio extrema*, but also to the actual harmony and concurrence of both in the great, essentially one, redeeming passion. We must not allow this undeniable cry of lamentation, extorted from the human weakness of the Godman,[1] to be taken away by an incorrect translation, such as would make πῶς συνέχομαι mean—How am I pressed towards it, how greatly I long for it! For, the ordinary signification of συνέχεσθαι is altogether against this, indicating a pressure and disturbance of spirit,[2] an intense suffering on some account (from fear, hunger, sickness; see in the New Testament, Matt. iv. 24; Luke iv. 38, viii. 37; Acts xxviii. 8; and, indeed, Phil. i. 23); moreover, the whole sentence would then be a mere repetition of the former wish; and, finally and

[1] This Neander acknowledges as "the first trace of Christ's soul-conflict in the near approach to His death."

[2] It is even the technical word for constriction in breathing. Schleiermacher has "oppression."

conclusively, the *συνέχεσθαι* by means of the *τελεσθῇ* is in itself indicated as a beginning of the *βάπτισμα*. Most appropriately does the Lord here utter an intimation, which, spoken aloud before all the people, would be in any degree intelligible to His nearest disciples only as concerning His own, already inwardly beginning sufferings;—just at this point, when He is inculcating the persistent stedfastness of all His followers against the enmity of the entire world.

Vers. 51–53. The full explanation of this has been given in Matt. x. Where the fire of Divine love is kindled, and peace seeks to come down from above to the earth, this can only take effect, first of all, in connection with divisions, caused by the opposition of unbelieving men;[1] the Lord foresaw all this, and it was indeed His own will, since His peace could be attained only by means of this warfare. Let them cry out against the fire of the Holy Ghost, and bring the same water to quench it which they poured upon His own head;—they will not succeed in extinguishing the work of God generally upon earth, nor will they do any other harm to the faithful, who abide in the fellowship of Christ, than to bring them through their cross, Matt. x. 38, to a resurrection unto victory.

Vers. 54–57. The Lord had now been speaking many things to His disciples, His words stretching far onwards to the final day of account when He should *come back* for His servants (after the departure therein presupposed); and He had further indicated the present time, *since He had come* now first, and in which the *διαμερισμός* between His disciples and His enemies was beginning to take effect (not without appeal to the people's decision)—as the beginning of the *ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν* of a continuous conflict. All this the *μυριάδες*, ver. 1, might have heard, and something of it understood; but at the conclusion He naturally returns to this *people* again, and gives *them*, on their part, the result of the whole warning and exhortation, as it affected them-

[1] The number five in ver. 52, or rather the division into two against three (with majority on the one side), has a proverbial character. But we cannot hold, with Sepp, that the five is alluded to as the number of *imprecation* in the East (for they are not all five placed under a malediction!); nor find a prophetic reference, with Lange, to the five confessions in the household of the church!

selves. Concerning the *wisdom* of remaining stedfastly faithful to the end, and thus avoiding condemnation, He could speak only to His disciples and servants; but concerning the same wisdom, in thinking of that future condemnation, and thus, by pondering, avoiding it, the wisdom which would at least effect the *beginning* of a separation for the kingdom of God, He can speak to all the people. Whosoever only will, may and should come over from the multitude into the little flock; may discern the signs of that time in which the kingdom had made its first entrance; and in His own conscience so voluntarily judge himself as to see the necessity of seeking grace while it was offered. Thus we clearly perceive the internal connection of this concluding word with all that had been spoken before. There are repetitions which the Lord utters according to His own deep-laid plan, for purposes of specific conviction. First, we have a reference to the signs of the time; taken, with variation in the expression, from Matt. xvi. 2, 3, where ver. 6, the Lord warned the disciples, as here ver. 1, against the leaven of the Pharisees: we thus see that He, at the same time, carries back His discourse to its original strain, before the appeal about the inheritance had interrupted it. "In earthly things ye are wise and prudent enough; wherefore do ye not also of yourselves *judge* (without arbiters, taking good note whence the life of man truly comes) what it would be right for you to do in this great *time of grace?*" That is, in order to obtain their rights in another *process*, and one infinitely more momentous than any concerning earthly inheritance,—against the adversary; and thus to escape the impending arrest of the Divine *justice!*

When the people in Judæa saw *the* cloud, according to its usual course, coming up from the west or from the sea (1 Kings xviii. 44), they might safely predict that a shower was coming: when the first traces of the south wind were felt, they could prognosticate heat (Job xxxvii. 17), and it came so to pass. The Lord now, as in Matt. xvi. 3, grounds an appeal to the hypocrites upon this: they could seize and rightly interpret the external appearances of earth and heaven, but their profound insincerity of heart, and wilful misapprehension of Divine things, permitted them not to mark the signs of the time which His coming had introduced! The parallel with St Matthew, the

reference to ver. 1 of this chapter, and the uniformly consistent meaning of ὑποκριτής throughout the New Testament (see again chap. xiii. 15), alike forbid us to accept the refinement which would on this special occasion adopt the fundamental meaning of the word, as it occurs in Lucian's ὑποκριτὴς ὀνείρων—as if our Lord would half-ironically say,—"Ye critical judges and discriminators of signs!" *Hypocrisy* is ever, indeed, the first leaven, the πρῶτον ψεῦδος, which stands in the way of man's perception and acknowledgment of the truth. The Lord had only taken His illustration from the clouds and winds of heaven (already as similitudes of the tempest of judgment and heat of tribulation); but now He makes His words more general, and adds the (yet more obvious, and therefore first mentioned) face or *appearance* of the *earth*—in connection with which we may refer to the reckoning of the harvest weeks, John iv. 35, and the like. "Ye *know* how to test these things; *how* or *wherefore* are ye so foolish as not to discriminate and test this time? Why but because ye are hypocrites, and will not!" *This time*, the time of God's gracious visitation (ch. xix. 44); the manifest tokens of which have constrained the people's voices to join with the voice of God, in crying—God hath visited His people! chap. vii. 16, i. 68. The Lord points, further, to all those signs of the time, concerning which see on Matt. xvi. (Vol. ii.); but especially here to the βιάζεσθαι of the kingdom of God, which was made manifest in the warfare which had broken out, and mentioned just before, vers. 51–53. Can, then, the natural understanding, for the sufficiency of which this text has been strangely enough cited, test these things, and discern what is right? Assuredly—but, first of all, only when a revelation of God in its signs lies obviously before it (for that is the question here); and, secondly? Alas, it *might* and it *should*, indeed; but it *cannot* and it *will not*, for the most part, because of other reasons which the Lord here bewails, discloses, and rebukes; it does not draw the simple and necessary deduction from the plainest and most indubitable premises, *because*—the sinner does not conscientiously use his reason, and will not of and in *himself* judge that which is right! This is the profound, and appropriate meaning of the following verse as it is uttered in this connection. Ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν (by no means merely, as Lange

thinks,—from your own private relations!) obviously means, first of all, *of yourselves*, as in chap. xxi. 30, so that not even signs and wonders should have been needful: but the *reason* why I of myself should discern and judge myself aright, lies only in this, that I have *in myself*, in the protest of my conscience against my sin, the standard of Divine truth; the herald of repentance when repentance is required of me, the announcer of grace when grace is preached to me. Thus the deep truth is just as Luther's gloss gives it—"Can you see how it goes with the creatures, and why do you not see *what is wanting in yourselves?*" Alas, indeed, he who sees *that*, and desires to see it without hypocrisy, is (as Oetinger says) "the true philosopher, who learns that which is right *in his own* person." *Only take note* (ver. 15); admit the great need of your own poor souls, which can derive life from no other possession than the proffered grace, which, when laid hold of in faith, makes it rich towards God! Take note, before all things, that *ye* have actually no *right* before God; that ye may, while in the way with Him, and before hell closes your course, obtain justification and peace.

Vers. 58, 59. Here we find the confirmation of what we remarked in Vol. i. upon this saying as it is reproduced here from the sermon on the mount:—that it is here generalised beyond its specific meaning there, and, as it were, *spiritually explained.* The mere reference to placability as towards a brother with whom I may have matter of litigation, would not be a distinctive *conclusion* of this discourse,—albeit it was occasioned by the contention of the brothers about their inheritance—and would be an inexplicable subsidence of the strain of it into a matter quite foreign to vers. 55–57. But the here intensified judicial expressions (the Latinism δὸς ἐργασίαν, *da operam*, probably a Roman legal formula; as also κατασύρειν and πράκτωρ, the officer, executor), induce us to suppose that the Lord designs to exemplify, by the complainant against his fellow-creature in the court of law, the guilt of want of love generally which cries out against the sinner before the presence of God. Thus is exhibited in this ἀντίδικος the accusing Moses *or the law*, which "often personally, as it were, comes forward in the heart of man" (Braune); and the Lord stringently urges upon all the necessity of seeking the mediation of grace to interpose and pre-

vent the impending condemnation, before the time runs out, and nothing remains but that eternal prison-house in which all the loveless, covetous, contentious parties alike come to everlasting harm.[1] In relation to this comparison and relation between God and men, the Father hath appointed His Son to be arbiter and mediator:—happy they who make their appeal to Him, knowing in themselves what they themselves come short in!

THREATENING APPEAL TO THE IMPENITENT, OCCASIONED BY THE REPORT OF PILATE'S INJUSTICE.

(Luke xiii. 2–9.)

There were present[2] at that time some who had failed to mark what in themselves demanded their own judgment and condemnation; and thus came into collision with our Lord, like that covetous man, ch. xii. 13, or that woman, ch. xi. 27. Such were the hearers who listened to His words! These have in their thoughts an occurrence which had recently taken place, and had been much talked of, in Jerusalem (as the article *περὶ τῶν* shows); and when the Lord ends His discourse by the threatening of the eternal prison of condemnation, they begin their hasty account of a fearful crime which the abominable Pilate had once more committed. It is probable that they did not relate this as a mere *novelty* (to come to something new); but they told Him, presuming that He knew it not, and as in some sort connected with His word just spoken as *they* had interpreted it, how the governor of Judæa (ch. iii. 1) had caused the blood of certain *Galilæans* to

[1] Neander's interpretation, "the Messiah would appear against them as a complainant," forgets the declaration of John v. 45.

[2] For that is the meaning of *παρῆσαν* here, and not "came thither," like *προσῆλθον*, ver. 31. Further, the *ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ καιρῷ* (which is different from *ἐκείνῳ*, Matt. xii. 1, xiv. 1) in connection with this *expression*, is not to be taken in so "indefinite" a sense as such formulæ generally are. Alford thinks my connection too fine-drawn, but I can retract nothing here. He has no proper ground for his own remark, that there is no such connection at all.

be miserably and shamefully shed in the midst of their sacrifices; they not being under his jurisdiction (see ch. xxiii. 7–12), and the act being in express contravention of the stipulations which forbade him to bring soldiers into the temple. By this they would say—"Dost thou call that a δίκαιον, or should we not condemn such an atrocity? Is not that a sign of *this time*, in which the oppressed people of God *suffer so many things* from the Gentiles? And what sayest thou to this,—thou who assertest thyself to be the Messiah and the Redeemer of God's people from the hand of their enemies?"—What He has to say, is very different from what they supposed or desired. He avoids all interference with political matters, now as He had ever done, with as much strictness as He had declined all intermeddling with matters of inheritance; for He is set, not to be the Judge of the Romans, but the Judge of the sins of Israel. He does not even take the *sacrifices* into consideration, so as to enter into the question of Pilate's terrific desecration of holy things, and of his guilt in mingling the blood of the victims of his own tyranny with the blood of the victims offered to God. He immediately seizes this account of the lamentable murder, or rather execution, in the temple, as occasion for that which concerned *His* office; He turns it to a threatening summons to all the impenitent, to whom such events as this should be no more than appeals for penitence, and types of coming judgment. His answer has two complementary parts. First, a plain and literal threatening of general destruction to all who do not repent; connecting this for *Galilee* with the report they had brought (vers. 2, 3),—and reminding them Himself of another similar for *Jerusalem* (vers. 4, 5). But then graciously follows in His condescension a new *challenge* to the repentance which alone can save—in an affecting *parable*, which exhibits longsuffering as an argument to humiliation, and which makes the transition from the people as a whole to *every individual* (vers. 6–9).

Vers. 2, 3. *Suppose ye!* Thus does He assail in His first word the foolish hearts of the narrators, specifically humbling and casting them down; suddenly passing from all which they calculated on hearing, to the piercing application to themselves. It was their will that Pilate alone should have received our Lord's condemnation; they had not considered whether, and how far,

these Galilæans themselves had sinned against others; and whether they, on the other hand, had not offered themselves as victims of tyranny, and made themselves martyrs of God's service.[1] But the Lord's severe and convincing language presupposes *against their will* what they, according to their own style of arguing, should have thought of—that these *Galilæans* (in the general turbulent spirit of their whole community) must necessarily have committed some outrage themselves, or involved themselves in some outbreak, which gave occasion to Pilate's wrathful command that they should be slain wherever they might be found, even though in the act of sacrificing in the temple. Thus, looked at externally, they might appear to have been sinners beyond others whom these things befell not; but even this supposition of *their* guilt instead of Pilate's, though more correct in itself, He does not admit as right; but tells them instead—Such are ye *all*, fundamentally! This is a holy example of the manner in which the blinded world should ever be answered, and its condemnatory rates of others' judgments be applied to itself. *Being sinners* and *suffering* according to desert—this is the great point which all alike must attend to, which must be eternally and unweariedly held up to their averted eyes. Although the Lord desires that every time, and in every particular case, proportionate punishment should be inflicted on specific guilt; yet He maintains in all cases the connection of suffering with sin. Consequently—"If ye repent not, ye will all suffer what your sins deserve, that is, in like manner, proportionately, perish! *This* is what I, your righteous Judge and compassionate Saviour, have to say to you impenitent sinners, on your way to judgment, if ye must have my sentence upon these things;—nothing more than that ancient word μετανοεῖν, which ye are so unwilling to hear." They *knew* very well what this meant—these hypocrites, who would not, in this time of mingled ruin and salvation, judge ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν this δίκαιον; just as afterwards in Hades it is enforced from the conscience of the rich, luxurious son of Abraham. "If ye be not con-

[1] Braune misses the meaning, when he assumes that these narrators of the outrage themselves concluded the specific guilt of these Galilæans, and were disposed to condemn them rigorously;—for such an assumption is highly improbable, when we take into account the tendency at that time to regard with favour every insurrection against the Romans.

verted, the sword of God and not merely Pilate's is at hand"—see Ps. vii. 13 and the like preaching in all the prophets. The Lord also speaks as a Prophet, when He says ὡσαύτως—this not being, as many think, stronger than ὁμοίως in ver. 5, but the reverse; by this latter expression He afterwards makes prominent the *similarity* of the judgment impending over all in its external manifestation, while ὡσαύτως belongs more generally to the strongly emphasized ἀπολεῖσθε (ye shall *suffer* your punishment like these), not however without pointing prospectively to what subsequently happened. The Galilæan people were also destroyed by the Roman sword, and, in consequence of their persistent obstinate spirit of insubordination, for the most part during the passover sacrifices at Jerusalem.

Vers. 4, 5. "Not *Pilate*, whose tyranny ye protest against, did those things which ye suffer, but God, who in manifold ways warns sinners by types and earnests of coming judgment." This is the meaning of what our Lord now Himself relates, or brings to their remembrance—the well-known falling of that *tower* upon the wretched eighteen, whom it *slew*. This means to say—The one is just like the other, whether Pilate or a falling edifice, the hand of man or so-called accident, all is by the hand of God! (Amos iii. 6.) However various in the kind and degree of their guilt these eighteen might be, yet are they hurried away with an equal doom of the Divine judgment, the depths of which, as dealing with individual men, man cannot penetrate! Thus much is certain—they were *guilty* before God; but now beware of thinking that the especial doom or suffering of these eighteen indicates a specific and greater guilt! (Comp. now, what is incorrectly quoted upon the former instance, Jno. ix. 2, 3.) It has been already remarked that the Lord now turns from the Galilæan people to the *dwellers in Jerusalem*. We know no more what kind of building this πύργος was,[1] than we know of the particulars of this downfall: if we bring the *wall* of the pool

[1] The word itself indicates any high building, like מִגְדָּל, see Matt. xxi. 33, and especially Luke xiv. 28; it *might*, therefore, be a "garden-house of some great man," in which a merry company were assembled,—or anything else, for the expression in itself is quite indefinite. The description ἐν τῷ Σιλωάμ is highly obscure in consequence of the ἐν, but probably refers to a district or field, so called from the brook.

שִׁלֹחַ, Neh. iii. 15 (which is the same, indeed, with שִׁלֹהַ) into comparison, we might regard it as a proper *tower*, and admit the probability of the assumption that those imprisoned by the Sanhedrim were confined there. This, at least, furnishes an apt parallel with the case of the Galilæans :—in both instances they were liable to punishment; in the former they had fallen under the sword of the government, in this they were overtaken by the anticipating judgment of God, reinforcing the judgments of men. Ὀφειλέται, too, instead of ἁμαρτωλοί, seems to point the same way, if it does not merely contain an allusion to ch. xii. 58, 59. The ὁμοίως, in this latter case, was yet more strikingly fulfilled in history :—the inhabitants of Jerusalem perished under the downfall of the temple and the city together upon the whole mass of the guilty (see Amos ix. 1); their Babel-tower slew those who were lusting after a false freedom, as the guilty prisoners of God's justice;—even as finally the fabric of the universe will fall around mankind, and in his death the tabernacle of his body falls upon every individual man.

Vers. 6–9. "But ye have not all thus perished yet; ye live by the longsuffering of God, which leadeth you to conversion; your Lord yet leaves you a term of grace wherein He waiteth for the fruits of repentance." The fig-tree has been generally, and without sufficient examination, made to correspond with the πάντες, the entire people of Israel; and to this view Matt. xxi. 19, and xxiv. 32 have seemed to conspire. But it is not difficult to reconcile all these passages, by supposing St Matthew's predominant reference to have been to the people generally, and *here* to the individual as involved in that. We are disposed to admit that the Lord takes His allusion from the figure employed for Israel in Joel i. 7; that this originated the specific fig-tree, and that in a certain sense He does include the whole nation, as the three years' coming and seeking (about which more hereafter) indicates. But withal we must maintain that the whole is only represented by the *individual*, and that the Lord thus makes a transition to every ἁμαρτωλός and ὀφειλέτης among the people, thus more severely singling them out. This alone seems adequately to respond to the awakening and heartsearching tendency and scope of the whole discourse, from the very beginning of which these yet living are opposed, as individually impenitent

to those already condemned and cut down; the specialising *eighteen* too tending in the same direction. Moreover, it might fairly be asked what the *vineyard* would be, if the one fig-tree were in itself the whole of the nation. It cannot be alleged that the entire earth is represented here as the Lord's vineyard (although in Matt. xiii. 38, it is the field which is to be sown); and to regard this feature of the parable as only intimating that the fig-tree, the nation, was not standing in an open unsheltered waste, but abundantly cared for and protected, is too violent an outrage upon the uniform prophetical phraseology to be admitted. Then the *vineyard* is Israel, but the fig-tree (uniting the two prophetical symbols) is every individual example and illustration of the character of the whole; for as in another parable the one man not having on a wedding garment does not imply that all the rest had it, so does the singling out this unfruitful tree by no means intimate that all the other trees or vines were fruitful. The Lord so orders His words, that every man may immediately think of himself; and passes in His discourse from the cutting down of the unfruitful tree to the Sermon on the Mount and the Baptist's preaching.

The other very usual error in the exposition of this parable, especially in the practical exposition of it, is that of regarding the *dresser of the vineyard* as being necessarily Christ, the interceding Mediator at the right hand of the righteous Father.[1] But in most of the parables which precede and which follow this, having the same character, Christ is the Lord; and is it not, similarly, He who is the certain man that had a fig-tree, in *His* vineyard? He is, indeed, the Lord whose *coming* is spoken of, who *seeketh* fruit, and whom the dresser appeals to with Κύριε, as deeming the cutting down and condemning things altogether beyond his own province. Even if the *three years* are only regarded as a proverbial notation of any definite time (or, possibly, with some latent reference to the fact that after three years a tree would give certain indication whether or not it would ever bear fruit), yet even then the *coming* must refer to Christ alone; but, for our own part, we see no reason to deny the reference

[1] Many refer it even to *the Holy Ghost* (Lange in this agrees with Alford, who regards it as quite clear)—but this appears to us, in a parable so simple, addressed to the people, too hidden an allusion.

discerned by Bengel and others to the three years' teaching of Christ, the third year of which was now lapsing—and hence we find it said ἔρχομαι and not ἦλθον. That the intercession only required this one year to be waited for, while Israel had forty years of suspended judgment, does not affect the matter in the least, for the longsuffering here exhibited in its threatening limitation can now, as ever, surpass its own limits. Who then is the dresser of the vineyard? The definite article attached to this should not be taken as denoting any one single labourer in the whole vineyard, but simply associates with one tree one who cares especially for *it:* and we are firmly convinced that the Lord here, as in Matt. xxi. 33, means the guides and leaders set over the people; a view which brings out a very much overlooked precision and fulness in the parable. Thus it embraces the two ideas; that of the responsibility of every man for his own individual soul, and that of the responsibility of those appointed to watch over the souls of others. Their office is thus exhibited as in a glass to the pastors of the people; and in a manner all the more humbling to them, inasmuch as it exhibits, in the assumption of what this dresser had done, what it was their duty *to have done* to the souls committed to their care. Sore judgments falling upon sinners, such as those before alluded to, and hurrying them away without repentance, most significantly preach to the preachers, and say—Did they perish through your neglect? Have ye done all that it was your duty to do to them? Thus the parable cries now as then—Seek, with all the earnestness of your souls, to save yourselves, and to save others, from coming judgment! He who would have less cause to be anxious about his own salvation, let him supplicate and labour for the souls entrusted to his care![1] Finally, in the deepest undertone of this most pregnant figure, the meaning is evolved—Let every man be the keeper of his own soul, let every man pray for the extension of his own term of grace, that in it he may more diligently labour! If any man complains—

[1] I must hold to this interpretation, in spite of all protest. It is not irreconcilable with this, that the Lord elsewhere announces to the husbandmen their own coming condemnation; He here only humbles them by the exhibition of what *should be* the duty and diligence of a husbandman or dresser of His vineyard.

"No man careth for my soul, to convert and do me good," it says to Him—On that very account convert and mend *thyself*, labour as the dresser of thine own tree, which should be so precious in thy charge! This *last* lies deep in the urgency of the intercession, this unprofitable tree pressing heavily upon the heart, as well as in the application of the subsequent words—How can I myself cut it down, that is not for me to do.

This idea, however, is only in the background; the final ἐκκόψεις (mark, not ἐκκόψω) is obviously the admission, enforced from the impenitent soul, of the Divine righteousness. The tree stands, like every one which is *planted* in God's vineyard, in its own good place, and has been abundantly *cared for* hitherto (at least by God Himself through the abundant means of grace in His very fruitful hill, Isa. v. 1); on that account fruit is *sought* on it, the Lord asks concerning this tree which He has in His vineyard. If He says—I find none! it will avail nothing that we ourselves, or others, have held the leaves for fruit. But we must not prematurely refer this to the fruits of good works, before that first fruit of repentance is yielded, without which all other fruit is worthless. We see plainly that this first command to cut it down, against which intercession avails, is designed only to convince of guilt and to threaten deserved punishment:—it is that laying of the axe to the root of the tree. Although unfruitfulness in itself is sufficient cause for cutting it down, the guilt of this unfruitfulness is increased by the significant remark that the barren tree absorbs uselessly the good of the land, is in the way of others' good,—a theme ample in profit for the preacher. The digging about and dunging embrace all that may be done externally in God's appointed way by patient fidelity; the issue depends upon the internal good or evil nature of the tree itself; hence Luther's translation excellently advances to the interpretation—Ob er *wolle* Frucht bringen, whether it *will* bear fruit,—though this is not in the text. *But if not*—then even the voice of love can object nothing more to its being cut down.[1] It must not be overlooked, in our interpretation of this, that it is, indeed, only the voice of *Divine* love and patience which is

[1] We must not add ἔτος once more to the εἰς τὸ μέλλον; the meaning is simply *in posterum*, like 1 Tim. vi. 19.

placed in the heart and upon the lips of the intercessor; just as it is only the grace of God which digs and dungs in the labour of His servants. It is a testimony of *the Lord's* patience, that the labourers thus intercede, that they can thus in faithful anxiety interfere. But this *very same* love and fidelity deems at the end the cutting down righteous and necessary. Thus the lovingkindness which was exhibited after the severity of vers. 2–5 returns into severity again; indeed it is very significant that the parable ends with this warning tone, the Lord making no answer of assurance. That lovingkindness was plainly exhibited in vers. 3 and 5, and is not revoked; but as it regards the individual, whether or not a long year of grace might be supposed for the people, the thought must have arisen—Dost thou know how long thy day of grace will last? Hast thou received an answer, if *thou* shall not this day be cut down?

The writer has been accustomed from the beginning of his ministry to adopt this section, Luke xiii. 1–9, as the Gospel for the annual fast-day (Rom. ii. 1–11 being the Epistle). In fact, the whole of the Gospels could not furnish one more appropriate for such a day; and we shall review it in this light, that we may mark the inexhaustible fulness of its contents, each particular of which, as it rises prominently before the mind, might be a yearly penitential subject. Everything is involved in it which a mission of repentance to a people demands:—the turning away from political relations to the real amendment of the inner man in the sight of God, the rejection of all false lust of freedom which seeks man's good in external things, or would restlessly seek to help itself that way; the judgment pronounced upon all improper condemnation of others, and comparison between sinners, while all are guilty alike and will without repentance perish, though with repentance all may with equal certainty be saved; the subordination of all judicial inflictions of God and all calamities by Him permitted, to the preaching of repentance to all who behold them; the reference to the people of the land as a whole, as also to every individual sinner counting as one in it; the solemn prospective glance at the doom of Israel as foreshadowing and typifying the judgments of Christendom; the plain and the parabolical words, the gentleness and the severity of God, the longsuffering tolerance (how many times already had

it been said—Cut it down!), and the limits of the prescribed period of grace; the duty and the blessing of the cure of souls, the care for others imposed upon every one both as labourer and intercessor; and all the other gracious truths which will be found by every man's thoughts who shall diligently seek them

HEALING ON THE SABBATH: THE DAUGHTER OF ABRAHAM LOOSED FROM THE BONDS OF SATAN.

(Luke xiii. 12, 15, 16.)

There were, in the midst of the mass of the impenitent Jews, pious souls. This poor woman is probably one of them: for the Lord can hardly be regarded as calling her a *daughter of Abraham* simply in the carnal sense, or as one of the chosen people; and He says nothing to her about the forgiveness of her sins, or of her sinning no more. Further, the zeal of her devotion led her to the synagogue on the sabbath day; and, when her health was restored to her, she immediately before all the assembly glorified God with a full heart. Yet was she plagued of *Satan*, like Job, not for her punishment but for gracious test and discipline; there is not in the entire New Testament a single syllable which sanctions the idea that possession of the devil, or a delivery to the harmful power of Satan, must necessarily have been the result of specific guilt on the part of the sufferer.[1] On the contrary, many of those who are healed are at once right in their hearts with God; while those who are in a state of frenzy so-called, are often found on the retirement of the malady to have been by it and in it inwardly advanced. Her affliction was great, for the εἰς τὸ παντελές (comp. Heb. vii. 25), notwithstanding its anomalous position, scarcely means to say that she could *only not entirely*

[1] As we may constantly read now-a-days. Even Neander assumes that such conditions always proceeded from some moral disorder. But at the foundation of all this there lies a denial of the objective power of Satan, and a disposition to carry these cases as much as possible into the region of human physical nature.

lift herself and look up, but that she was so entirely bent down as not to be able to look up *at all;* and, consequently, that in all probability she did not perceive the presence of Jesus. Therefore does He at once regard her with compassion, calls her to Himself and heals her on the sabbath, doing the works of God from the unrestrained impulse of the love of God. With most majestic simplicity He only announces at first the fact—"Poor woman thou *art loosed* from thine infirmity, thine eighteen years are now ended—lift up thyself, for thou canst!" But, because her faith still required some instrumentality in the miraculous work, He lays His hands upon her—for that reason, and not for the sake of the act itself.

And now the ἀρχισυνάγωγος is indignant, for he is under the necessity of beholding once more that stereotyped matter of offence perpetrated before his eyes,—the healing on the sabbath! Yet what can he do to show his vexation, full as he is of the spirit of caste and official dignity, though devoid of all sympathy with a good deed? He does not venture to address Jesus;[1] nor indeed the woman, for her glorious sabbath-thanksgiving to God repressed his direct indignation against her, by appealing to the latent good feeling of his nature. He therefore does as all men do who make indirect and covert attacks, avoiding the right object, and never adventuring on the right word; he turns, in a manner almost ridiculous, to the whole innocent multitude, and preaches to them, though they had nothing at all to do with the matter, a strange, inconclusive, and most self-stultifying sermon. He begins, indeed, in a very stately manner, with an almost literal quotation from Ex. xx. 9, 10; but loses all sense of propriety at once, and knows not what he is saying afterwards. "In the six working-days *come*"—hither then, if they were sick? Thus the *sick* must rather on the sabbath day remain at home, and not come to the synagogue where the power of God might perchance give them healing? What then had the poor woman *done*, that he forbids all others to do the like in future? She did nothing on her own part, uttered no one word of supplication; she did no more than come forward at the Lord's bidding, and lift herself up when she felt that she could. One hardly

[1] Schleiermacher—"he would seem as if he took no account of Jesus in what he says." This is not enough, or rather saying too much.

knows how to understand that wonderful imperative—On the sabbath day *μὴ θεραπεύεσθε*! whether—*Be not made whole*, or what! Thus the woman would be in duty bound to reply—No, Lord, this is the sabbath day, *I am not yet loosed*, to-morrow I shall be able to lift myself up, and praise the Lord! We see that the man has become, in his blind zeal, a very fool; he is constrained in his bitterness to allow the *θεραπεύειν* of the wonderful power of Jesus, as ready to be exerted all other days of the week for all kinds of afflicted; but yet forbids to *the people* their *θεραπεύεσθαι*, that is, their reception of God's grace, on the ground of its being an *ἐργάζεσθαι*!

It is on that account that the Lord spares him in the answer which He, though unaddressed, is constrained to give. He applies to him personally the epithet which befitted his whole class *ὑποκριτά*,[1]—but immediately extends His words (as in the former case) to all people generally in the synagogue, who shared the ruler's feeling. Consult what has been already said on Matt. xii. 11, 12 (Lu. vi. 9), and compare Lu. xiv. 5 ensuing; from which it will appear that in St Luke alone we have three similar incidents, and analogous answers. But each of the three is characteristic and individual; the Lord in the present case naturally says nothing about the falling into a ditch, but merely refers to the *loosing and leading away* their cattle to watering; showing them that not one of those rigorous censors would deny to his own property, the cattle, the care which was daily necessary, because it was the sabbath; though even these two simple operations were much more like working than His laying a hand upon the sick, or than the *θεραπεύεσθαι* on the part of the people! Closely and specifically laying hold of their common life and its customs, He casts down the folly of the ruler's reply by the reasonableness of His own; He justifies them in what they do to their cattle, not indeed on account of the self-interest which impelled these hypocrites so to act towards them, but because the law of God did not actually design that an ox or an ass should suffer

[1] We do not prefer, with Bengel and others, *ὑποκριταί*, as if the ruler had not deserved the express designation. This Plural might very easily have been a correction added to the *ὑμῶν*: the Peschito gives it in the singular—נָסֵב בְּאַפֵּא; and we must suppose that the speaker, on the present occasion, would have one word, at least, immediately addressed to him.

thirst on the sabbath, after having been fed in its stall. These hypocrites might indeed, if they had been so rigorously in earnest about preserving the rest of the sabbath, have allowed their beast to wait, without endangering its life, till the first of the six days; or with a little trouble might have previously provided in another way for its watering. But such earnestness was not in their spirit. He therefore puts them to shame for their want of love towards *man*, and that their hearts were sealed against His Divine ἀγαθοποιῆσαι. And in speaking of a *daughter of Abraham* (for He sees before His eyes an Israelitess indeed), He sets before them the strongest contrast with a mere animal; for such a prerogative, when a reality in the sight of God, was a very high dignity, comp. chap. xix. 9 and John i. 47. He *knows* at once, not without a Divine intuition into all the circumstances, all that was here to be known, and all that it was right for Him to say:—the piety of the woman was obviously to be seen and heard of all; by a profounder knowledge He attributes the ἀσθένεια by which the woman had become contracted or grown together, to a πνεῦμα, consequently to Satan in its ultimate cause;[1] and, finally, of the eighteen years He had been informed by no man. (The ἰδοὺ contemplating the whole, comp. previously ver. 7, ἰδοὺ τρία ἔτη, corresponds in the Sept. with the Heb. הִנֵּה, *e. g.*, Deut. viii. 4; and brings out the years prominently, as well known to Him, or as if they were written on the woman's person.) "Could it be forbidden to loose, if one could, a woman so frightfully bound, on the sabbath day? Do ye then acknowledge no necessities of charity besides the necessities of interest? Here is in very deed a work of necessity and a work of love!" He designedly and calmly concedes to their folly that His ἀπολέλυσαι, and the laying on of His hands, was a work; in order that He may thereby make His own acts of healing, thus placed in common with human actions generally under the law, types of all works of love which His followers may ever perform. The cold hyper-saintly ones might say, If she has been bound these eighteen

[1] The Evangelist's narrative derived the "spirit of infirmity" from the Lord's own words. Braune thinks it a "strange expression;" but it is perfectly in accordance with a condition, which was neither natural sickness nor the customary possession. The Lord never laid His hands upon the actually possessed, as here, ver. 13.

years, surely she might wait yet one day longer! But that very circumstance He makes an argument of the contrary, for he who loves his neighbour as himself would rather say—Not one moment longer must she suffer, if help can be afforded her! Could it be *forbidden* thus to help? Οὐκ ἔδει *catechetically* answers, in infinite condescension, the inconsiderate, proud, and unintelligent δεῖ of ver. 14. *Men ought* was the theme there; so now the *ought* is abundantly returned:—*Ought* not, *must* not she, according to the law of love, which specially ordains God's works for the sabbath as man's labour for the remaining days, to be loosed from this misery? But when our Lord so specifically mentions the *bond* with which *Satan* had bound this woman, we think that the reason must not be merely sought in the comparison with the unbound cattle; but (as the Lord embraced all things in His penetrating glance, and ever contemplated man's spiritual relations to God) we apprehend that He secretly beheld in this συγκύπτειν and ἀνακύπτειν a *type* of spiritual conditions. *Satan*, verily, has bound wretched man like an animal to his stall, so that he looks down to the earth; but Christ looses the bond, and lifts up man's face to praise His God once more. Happy is he who, after being *loosed*, needs no further *leading;* but spontaneously goes to the *water of life* for the abiding refreshment of his soul![1]

[1] We pass over altogether what follows, Luke xiii. 18–21; since we cannot find any connection here for the repetition of these two parables, comp. in Vol. ii. Schleiermacher agrees with Storr in referring this Ἔλεγε δέ to the preceding, as if the Lord thus continued to speak in the synagogue; but we confess that we perceive no connection. And it is hard to understand how this is an interpolation "giving the Evangelist's view;" that he is commenting upon the narrative of the healing, in these parables, and by way of appendix (as Lange thinks), appears to us a very artificial suppcsition. We would rather say—if the non liquet is thought inadmissible—that vers. 18–21 are an introduction to the following ver. 22:—Thus did the Lord continue (after these His earlier parables) to sow the seed, and to hide His leaven. But even this does not satisfy us.

ANSWER TO THE QUESTION WHETHER THERE ARE FEW THAT BE SAVED: THE STRAIT GATE AND SHUTTING OUT OF MANY.

(Luke xiii. 24–30.)

(Matt. vii. 13, 14, 21–23, viii. 11, 12, xx. 16.)

This solemn question, addressed to our Lord while on His way to suffer for the salvation of man, may be proposed to Him by men, with three various designs, and in a threefold spirit. It may be objected *haughtily* or wantonly, with different degrees of pride, down to the scornful contradiction of the word which had already declared that there were few; it may be uttered *good-naturedly*, the hard saying being rendered light by defect of apprehension, and with vague good wishes and hopes on behalf of self and others; or proposed *despondingly*, in a more or less disheartened spirit; almost despairing, if the Lord meant strictly "few," but a little in doubt upon that point. In all these three inspiring motives, the question is really asked, Is it assuredly so? but it is only the desponding spirit which asks in true earnest, longing for an answer, while doubting in the very slightest degree whether any other will be given than that which already was latent in the question. The haughty questioner knows better himself, and contradicts in the form of a question. The easy-tempered spirit hopes confidently enough for an answer which will set him at rest. We gather, however, from the manner in which he here publicly accosts the Lord in the way, and still more, from the answer, inspiring fear rather than consolation, which he receives, that this questioner, so indefinitely introduced by St Luke,[1] is not a man who has been sorely tested and disheartened; but neither is he an altogether frivolous mocker, for the Lord enforces upon him immediately the duty of earnest striving; consequently we must regard his tone of mind as the result of the mixture of good-natured doubt with something of

[1] For all persons besides Christ retire into the background; their history being recorded not for the sake of its reference to them, but for its application to us, and as introducing the Lord's words addressed to us all.

Jewish bigotry and loftiness.[1] Luther's translation of the concise expression in which St Luke gives the question, hits its meaning precisely:—Lord, dost Thou actually intend to say, is it Thy literal and earnest meaning, that few are saved? The man had either heard with his own ears, or been told by others, what the Lord had uttered in the sermon on the mount, and probably, also, the often recurring declaration of Matt. xx. 16; there is so much earnestness in his disposition, that he cannot altogether shake off the impression; it followed him and allowed him no rest. The objection, however, which his question implies, rests upon his Jewish supposition that of course all the Jews will be safe, and consequently that there must be essentially many to be saved. This we are given to understand by the answer, which with its "*Ye*" down to ver. 28, embraces the Jews who stood around at the time.

Instead of an open and explicit answer, the Lord at first evades the question in ver. 24; while, at the same time, He reasserts His former word concerning the strait gate, *demanding* of every one earnest and strenuous diligence for himself. On this follows immediately the *reason* of it, giving the real answer in a twofold way: *Every man* may be saved, but many will not through their own fault. He speaks further with *For:* many will not enter in, though they desired it after a certain manner, and thought themselves secure (vers. 24–28)—others (in themselves many!) will enter in, though *ye* suppose otherwise, ver. 29. Finally, in ver. 30, the warning conclusion is deduced—Thus will the first and the last change places! returning back to the first note—Therefore *strive!*

Ver. 24. "*Question* not much—*strive* rather!" This is the first keynote of the reply; and it is applicable to all such and similar questions which man's curiosity may presume to throw out for the gratification of his curiosity, while his own soul's

[1] Schleiermacher is certainly wrong in thinking that "Jesus had been accustomed to send forward messengers who should announce His coming, and every one might observe their little success; consequently the question was *assenting*—Is it not true, that there are only few?"—This is quite inconsistent with the answer. If we must thus seek motives, it would be more obvious to say that the man would think—So *many* follow Thee in Thy journeyings; in what sense wouldst Thou speak of few?

interests are not fundamentally cared for. The question in itself involved a double error: first, the supposition that it cannot possibly be so hard a case, since all Israel must necessarily sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom; and then, that the σώζεσθαι was a thing altogether taken for granted *in his own case*, the question being asked only for the sake of others.* Both these delusions are answered by the Lord's single first word—ἀγωνίζεσθε: for its full and pregnant meaning is, *Strive —ye!* First of all, and preeminently, this referred, as we have said, to the Jews (vers. 28, 29 show this), but then more extensively to *all men*, as sinners and needing a σώζεσθαι—in opposition to whom as eternally contradistinguished from them stands this one sinless Son of Man, whose sublime discourse never adopts the word *we* when the sinful condition of man is the theme! To enter through the *strait gate*—that is now and ever the great concernment! Without sufficient grounds, Griesbach reads θύρας here also at the beginning instead of πύλης: but the variation of the phrase in the next verse is founded upon as good reason as the literal reference to the earlier utterance in this. Both words are pertinently chosen as related to each other: not, however, that πύλη is an external gate and θύρα an inner door behind it; but πύλη gives the comprehensive idea of an *entering* generally (an open way for passage, a door or pass unlocked, hence here quite parallel with the whole of the narrow *way*), while θύρα gives more definitely the distinctive idea of admission or exclusion, when the discourse reaches the shutting of the door. Thus in as far as πύλη here of itself may be regarded as designating a free and broad gate, the στενὴ πύλη of Matt. vii. 13 contained in it an ὀξύμωρον. Yet was it there as here—a gate, nevertheless, which stands open for εἰσελθεῖν, and that to every man, who seeks it in the right way and truly finds it. *Strive*, struggle with all earnestness, and with self-denying determination, throughout all the impediments of the whole course[1]—then *shall ye be able!* Thus, this word most decisively repudiates the idea of any hidden

[1] In this expression of our Lord, we have the germ of St Paul's subsequent phraseology, in which the idea of the athlete and the contest, with and without figure, so habitually occurs.

Divine decree which from the beginning excluded any man, and by which the actual ὀλίγοι are determined; and refers the whole matter to ourselves, of whom the εἰσέρχεσθαι and ἰσχύειν are predicated:—a word before which the whole brood of human and conventional methods of evading and denying its force should retire into annihilation.

But though most assuredly all might, and all could, if *they* would, enter in, yet this true and perfect willing, even to the final end and entrance, is a great and glorious, and therefore a rare thing. The Lord does not merely confirm, He *strengthens* also His former utterance, and makes the gate more strait than it first appeared in the former declaration. Then the contrast was with the many who naturally walk in the broad way: but now, even among those few who care for the kingdom of God, and actually strive after salvation—there are *many* who strive in vain! This is indeed a hard saying, and there is much that is highly critical involved in it.[1] And first, it may be said with strict propriety that ζητεῖν is not ἀγωνίζεσθαι, and that the Lord here, according to ver. 28, refers to that perverted endeavour of Israel described in Rom. ix. 31–33, which passes by the strait gate, knocks in vain at a false door, and by no means *can* establish a righteousness of its own, or discover a broader way than that of regeneration through faith in Christ. For in connection with the second εἰσελθεῖν we do not find διὰ τῆς στενῆς πύλης, and hence we may understand it as meaning that many will seek *to enter*, by other ways broader than this, into the kingdom of God and its salvation. But the meaning penetrates deeper, and, according to the strict and emphatic connection of the entire discourse, includes the idea that there are many who even run for a time in the right course of the narrow way (1 Cor. ix. 24), eager to *contend* for the crown through the "strait gate"—but they neither run nor strive lawfully! (2 Tim. ii. 5.) What then is that ζητεῖν which is false, or which avails not to the final entering in; which, however it may resemble the lawful striving,

[1] "A more direct contradiction to the destructive error of a final restoration of all the fallen than these words contain, can scarcely be imagined." So says v. Gerlach, and we unite with him in protesting against the error; but *this* discourse of our Lord, properly understood, is not one of the strongest protestations against it.

only engenders a false confidence, which will be undeceived at last? It may be replied that the many do not, properly speaking, *strive*, their earnestness and zeal is not sufficiently intense,[1] and that may well be: but we must add—what is alas, too commonly forgotten,—that many there are who strive only *too much*, that is, who secretly introduce into the good fight of *faith* self-righteousness in its deepest disguise, would enforce their salvation by the ζητεῖν of their own personal energy, working and will, forgetting all the time that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. (Rom. ix. 16.) This declaration is the necessary complement for the right apprehension of the meaning of our Lord's words—or we may take for that purpose words of His own on another occasion, Matt. xviii. 3, xix. 14, Mark x. 15, spoken for our encouragement under the form of stern requirement. The final οὐκ ἰσχύσουσι makes it manifest that He is pointing, not merely to a lack of energy applied, but also to an excess of the wrong kind of energy:—they shall not accomplish their purpose by all *their own* might, to renounce which, indeed, is the true warfare of self-denial, and the only method of attaining to that simplicity and poverty of spirit which can alone enter through the strait gate of grace.[2]

Vers. 25–27. Hitherto the gate has been only strait, now at length the door is *shut*. The Lord dilates His warning declaration, predicting—first, the impending *rejection* of the many; as exhibited in a similitude wherein a renewed rejection of those who revolt against the first is solemnly asserted:—and then, in ver. 28, the misery of those who are thus irreversibly *thrust out*. The τότε of ver. 26 answers to the ἀφ' οὗ of ver. 25, and in it lies the emphasis of the whole. This has immediate reference to their *exclusion* at the first period of judgment in the kingdom established upon earth (ver. 28), and not to the day of final condemnation. Compare on this what was said in Vol. iii. on

[1] According to Roos—would enter with "slothful wishes." Or v. Gerlach—seek it "in a certain external sense."

[2] The unqualified translation of this passage which the generally penetrating "Kalender für Zeit und Ewigkeit" (Villingen in Schwarzwald, 1843. Romanist alas!) gives us—"they shall not be able, *because* they do not apply *force* enough"—is certainly biassed, onesided, and false.

Matt. xxiv. 48–51. Ver. 27 does, indeed, extend forward its threatening, for the several judgments stand in close connection; but the being excluded is not yet, as such, eternal torment.[1] The Master of the house is *risen up*, after long and patient waiting, to bring in the first concluding period of His kingdom's revelation for all who have been made worthy; they who regarded themselves as having the prerogative to enter, and who unexpectedly find themselves *without* when the door is suddenly shut, begin to utter most earnestly their "Lord, Lord," and will not submit to His first rejection, for they flatter themselves they have been in fellowship with Him, and that He must, in spite of every appearance, know and acknowledge them. We shall find it hard here to include in this proscription all Israel, seeking the kingdom independently of Christ, unless we firmly hold fast the principle that in such widely-comprehensive representations as this, we are not to expect that every circumstance will precisely harmonise. In the present case the accompanying ὄχλοι are most obviously in our Saviour's view, and the discourse connects itself with, and springs from, them—then *figuratively* extending its range further. The *eating and drinking* in the Lord's presence (note—only ἐνώπιον without any internal communion) suggests to us immediately the miraculous feedings; but the καὶ πίνειν includes a reference to the fulfilment of that wilderness type, 1 Cor. x. 3, 4, in the Christian sacrament; the general fundamental idea remains—"Yet were we admitted guests at the *sometime* table of Thy kingdom and grace, where Thou wast so compassionate and patient! Thou hast taught in our streets, among our houses and towns, giving Thy public instruction to us as most frequent and attentive hearers"—as was abundantly the case at this very time,[2] and will ever be the case with

[1] And *so far* this is not literally one of the strongest texts to establish the definitive loss of salvation in the case of the many—though the final judgment lies threateningly in the background of the former.

[2] Which adjunct idea Schleiermacher makes prominent: "this word was spoken in Galilee, where many thus heard, and ate and drank with Him." This is correct enough as the point of connection for the whole figurative discourse, but we cannot admit what follows—"and stood in the relation of guests to Jesus!" For this is inappropriate and untrue:—who was a guest of Jesus? *This* word is therefore figurative, and reaches much further.

many who place their sole confidence in this, down to the final shutting of the door. But although these objectors mean to say—Who, if not *ourselves*, shall enter in to Thee? yet have they never purely and essentially *done* His will; and they receive as a whole and in common (though not without degrees of difference) that fearful word spoken before in Matt. vii. 23; they remain without as evil-doers, and through their own personal fault.[1]

Vers. 28–30. Without disparagement to the much wider and deeper significance of the first warning, the Lord now turns the immediate application of His word to Israel not seeking the kingdom of God, or if seeking it, seeking it otherwise than in the true way. That which He thus predicts is a repetition from Matt. viii. 11, 12. Thus, moreover, they are not *few* who shall sit down at the table (see the popular notion, Luke xiv. 15, as it is rightly to be interpreted)—this, though intimated (and asserted in Matt. viii. in connection with these words), is by design not expressly uttered here.[2] The excluded now first *see* ("to their intolerable vexation"—Roos thinks) the blessedness of those who are admitted—compare afterwards chap. xvi. 23. The *coming*, entering in, and sitting down in enjoyment, is the antithesis of the mere ζητεῖν previously used. Whether, as Bengel suggests, the successive order of the four quarters prospectively hints at the process of the Gospel's missionary history, which began with the East and now rests in the South, we would leave undecided: however it may offend some, the thing itself is certain. The Lord probably takes His last saying, ver. 30 (*here* uttered with a strictly corresponding εἰσίν and ἔσονται), from an earlier declaration which had been spoken in full as we find it

[1] It is most striking that ἐργάται stands here solitarily in St Luke, which always designates labourers in the hire and service of another. We never find פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן so translated in the Old Testament: but in 1 Macc. iii. 6 the expression is thus found. We have already referred to this in our Andeutungen für gl. Schriftv. ii. Sammlung, among the allusions to passages in the Apocrypha. Compare, moreover, Xenoph. Memor. ii. 1. 27.—τῶν καλῶν καὶ σεμνῶν ἐργάτην.

[2] Miserably deficient is the narrow interpretation of Schleiermacher, that "only to the Palestine Jews was it so preeminently hard, to find this first entrance: *The others*, *not* a few, but very *many*, might enter in, from all places and ends of the earth!"

in Matt. xx. 16: thereby referring the answer here given to *both* those places in which He had spoken of the "few." It is still remarkable, in regard to the prophetical allusion just mentioned, that in fact, and on the whole, the *Oriental* first Christians have become the last, and that the late comers from the South to all appearance may become the first. Thus much is certain, amid these doubtful applications, that the word of the Spirit often embraces, as we see in this discourse of our Lord, and generally elsewhere, the most specific fulfilments of its meaning in individual cases and in internal things, in immediate connection with its typical exhibition in the general progress of His kingdom: for the history of that kingdom is so ordered by His hand as to be the counterpart of all His other wonderful works. (Ps. lxxviii. 2.)

REPLY TO THE HYPOCRITICAL WARNING AGAINST HEROD. THE FOX AND THE PROPHET-MURDERESS. PROPHETIC DEPARTURE FROM JERUSALEM.

(Luke xiii. 32–35 [Matt. xxiii. 37–39].)

Our Lord's long last journey to Jerusalem, as recorded by St Luke, will always retain some measure of obscurity for the harmonists. Two things, however, are sufficiently plain:—first, that he mentions individual occurrences without strict regard to chronology, even repeating and intercalating some things elsewhere recorded; and, secondly, that in his account of the entire journey, the emphasis is laid upon the Lord's going to encounter His closely impending sufferings and death. We cannot concur with Wieseler's recent scheme;[1] and think it very doubtful

[1] And particularly in his assumption that Lu. ix. 51 corresponds with the coming to the feast of Tabernacles, Jno. vii. 10; for this would be too early, being half a year before, for the ἀνάλημψις now approaching (a word which we must not explain away); besides which, such a public journeying towards Jerusalem very ill harmonises with the ὡς ἐν κρυπτῷ of St John.

whether Luke xiii. 22 indicates the setting out towards Bethany of Jno. xi. 1; to us it seems more like an intimation of a continuous onward course after chap. ix. 51. And here in chap. xiii. 31 the *same day* cannot signify a definite day of departure, for that would not consist with ver. 22. We mention this now preparatorily, as it will be found of moment for the interpretation of the three days.

Another preliminary question before we enter on the subject is this,—What was the meaning of the warning against the snares of Herod, on the part of the Pharisees? or,—Did the information that Herod sought to kill Jesus rest upon any foundation of truth? It is scarcely imaginable in itself that the Pharisees would warn the Lord with a sincere and honest intention, and the idea is contradicted by the severe reply which they received; but it is almost equally obvious that the entire story was no more than a false report. That Herod, after the beheading of John the Baptist, should have ventured to conceive an attack upon Jesus, accords neither with his character nor with the simple account of Lu. ix. 7–9, which represents him as greatly desirous to see the Saviour, a desire, too, which chap. xxiii. 8 once more exhibits as having been permanent. Thus these two passages of the same Evangelist forbid us to assume that Herod wished to frighten Jesus away from his territory, and employed these Pharisees to that end. It were better to say, that, if they did not actually invent the θέλει σε ἀποκτεῖναι (which, again, seems unconformable with their craftiness of character), yet they had taken up some groundless report and brought it to the Lord—in order that they might put an end to His too long wandering about and evasion, and thus hypocritically hasten Him to Jerusalem; with the design, further, of testing whether He would be accessible to fear.[1] This very probable supposition best harmonises with the otherwise very obscure answer of Jesus; which certainly does not, as has been said, "make it very plain that the words of the Pharisees were *no* falsehood."

[1] "They make Herod's murderous character their pretence; he had already caused the Baptist to be put to death. That was a crafty scheme, if it had succeeded. Jesus, in exhibiting fear, would elevate the courage of His enemies, and, more than that, would have destroyed His own reputation among the people, thus making Himself an easy prey." Braune.

Ver. 32. We can now altogether agree with Ebrard, that the Lord, penetrating their cunning device, replied to them *ironically*—"Tell this Herod, who, *according to your representation*, is so crafty." "That He terms Herod crafty, as if He believed them; and that He further commissions them to go to this Herod, whom they thus complain of to Him;—both these things, *taken* together, intimate plainly that He perceives *their* craftiness." *Herod and yourselves are altogether in concert and alike*—this is the fundamental idea for our understanding of the word. *They* had begun—ἔξελθε καὶ πορεύου; and He now, in His first πορευθέντες, immediately gives them back their dismissal. Now, although the designation "that *fox*" very aptly describes one who had acquired and maintained dominion, less by energetic vigour than by subtle intrigues, and might very probably have been an expression in common use which the Lord thus gave them to understand that He knew; and although such a comparison "in its ancient sense and use" might, as has been said, contain a less offensive allusion than in our times;—yet we cannot believe that our Lord would *directly* and in earnest have spoken in such a manner of the *ruler of His country*, and with the possibility of their going and saying—He called thee a fox! This would have been unexampled in the whole tenor of our Lord's deportment, who so scrupulously maintained decorum towards the existing powers of the land; always diverting the question both from Herod and Pilate when occasion arose for speaking against them, and for deep reasons not even using in all its rigour His own prophetic prerogative of inveighing against rulers. That He does call Herod a fox, however, remains certain after all; but the case is very much altered, and does not transgress the limits of propriety to be preserved, if, as Olshausen says, "this word is in reality aimed only at themselves, under the name of Herod—that *that* fox, of whom they idly reported, existed

[1] Neander thinks it would have been unworthy of our Lord, to rebuke the Pharisees through Herod, and that He would have told them plainly that He penetrated their craftiness. But it appears to us that He *does* let them know it, though in their own tone, and in a manner which *they* would well understand. Yet Neander himself says, just as we have said, that these Pharisees probably acted from motives of their own using for their own purposes a report probably untrue.

nowhere else than in their own hearts." In fact this seems to express itself in the ironical tone of the ταύτῃ itself. How closely compacted are you and your Herod in cunning against Me! The merely bestial, that is, equally stupid and weak, the despicable fox-cunning seems to form a contrast with the more intensely evil enmity of Jerusalem, the public murderess of the prophets, springing as it did from human malignity, or indeed from the roaring lion of hell: but both are quite in concert if we understand it thus—"Now will ye as foxes concert with the fox to affiright Me away, and speed Me to the place where more violent attacks and indignities await Me. Suffice that the Lord gives them to see that He penetrates their hearts' design: tells them Himself what they might go and repeat—I regard not your wiles or your power; *I go My way*, without any respect to your *Depart hence! Behold*, what evil am I doing, that I should fear death from the ruler of the land? My works, as you see them, are altogether unpolitical and without harm—*I cast out devils* (which is *your* stumbling-block, but which Herod the Sadducee will not believe), and *do cures* as My useful occupation!" He designedly omits to say anything here of His *doctrine*, which indeed did not concern or trouble Herod, in order to adapt His words still to the ironical fiction; He does not allude to His preaching the kingdom of heaven—but the Pharisees well know what His works signify and what they attest. These works I do *to-day and to-morrow*—we can find in these words only a *proverbial* expression: as long as it pleases Me, as long as it is appointed to Me; and also to-morrow, instead of departing hence to-day according to your will. For it is just as plain that the σήμερον in vers. 32 and 33 are the same, as that the expression for the *third* day is varied in order to show that the proverbial, and not the literal sense, is intended. Thus we are not to think of three literal days of journeying from here to Bethany or Jerusalem,[1] nor can we admit the explanation that on the third day the Lord would leave Galilee, would end His work there; but the expression is perfectly parallel with Jno. xi. 9, 10, and says—I have My appointed time, in which I can

[1] We cannot certainly, with Sepp, who is ever ready to find similitudes and mystic allusions, discern in these three days' journeying a figure of the three years' ministry.

continue to walk and to act, fearless and undisturbed. *Here*, however, we must add—a time which is fast running out, only three days, that is, a few days left to run.[1] Some have been disposed to interpret the τελειοῦμαι in strict harmony with the ἐπιτελῶ; although the very form of the word shows that it was intended to indicate something different and contrasted. It has even been taken transitively, and therefore tautologically—I finish all these works; or in an indefinite middle sense (de Wette's translation—*vollende ich*—I perfect), applying it to the *journeying* as not to-day, but on the day after the morrow, or when it pleases Me.[2] But how superficial is this meaning, how contradictory to the following verse, where the Lord assumes for the following day merely the same πορεύεσθαι as to-day and to-morrow, and by no means a τελειοῦν, τελειοῦσθαι, or anything like a ceasing, and removal elsewhere. We see that the days are not to be taken literally; but the τελειοῦμαι on an already appointed *third* day, that is, a day no longer in the distance, must mean something distinctive. Had not His being *killed* been spoken of, and must not the Lord be supposed to have given a reply *to that?* Does He not in the parallel clause (ver. 33), speak forthwith of ἀπολέσθαι, the place and time of which were well known to Him? But if the τελειοῦσθαι refers to this, we must give up every idea of a literal reckoning of the days, which would at best only reach as far as the entrance into Jerusalem. We have, then, good grounds for understanding the Lord to say —I *die* indeed, but not through the artifice of the fox Herod, ye more than foxes; and not yet to-day or to-morrow! This is the only reply of the Lord to these cunning ones, which corresponds with the situation of the case, and harmonises with every other consideration: "I do My duty, and undergo My destiny; I distribute life—and go to My death." But the Lord designedly

[1] Alford does not concede this, because of the positive use of the *three days* in an affirmative sentence,—of which no instance can be brought where the proverbial meaning is implied; but we think that it is in itself highly natural, and is attested in this case decidedly by the whole context.

[2] Schleiermacher, in an oral delivery which I penned down—"On the day after the morrow I will go quietly on My way, without either haste or fear, without any constraint of Herod!" Almost like Dr Paulus—"I have yet some days in which to effect certain cures, but will bring them to a close on the third day, and then voluntarily go on My way."

employs a word which certainly does not in itself signify *dying;* the expression is a pregnant one, which embraces at once life or death. We understand it less as saying—*Then come I to the end,* than as rather saying—*I am perfected,* that is, I finish My *course,* attain My *goal,* accomplishing perfectly by My death the great task of My redeeming life. Thus Phil. iii. 12 is to be understood, according to the phraseology of the race-course; comp. Acts xx. 24. (On the other hand, we venture not to penetrate so far as to the meaning of Heb. v. 9, ii. 10.)

Ver. 33. The connection is now very clear and precise:—"On a *third day* (which will not come before it should come and must) I shall arrive at the end of My life and its work; *but till then* (that is, yet a few days, for I mean not literally the third day) *I must walk,* or even *journey.*[1] Thus it is not according to your direction, but as the Father hath appointed unto Me." Further—"I shall not indeed remain here, whence ye would have Me depart (πορεύεσθαι, as in ver. 31), but assuredly go *unto Jerusalem,* not however to escape danger from Herod, but —to fall into your and your fellows' murderous hands. Do ye suppose that I know not this? Or that the thought of this would affright Me?" For one moment the tone of irony, keenly touching their secret, is heard, before the sad lamentation of slighted love bursts forth and absorbs all else. "*Jerusalem* the holy city, in which Satan also has his course, may not lose that honour which has been her appropriate prerogative from the beginning; to her belongs the preeminence and she shall keep it; there have the enemies of God's kingdom their seat, and all those who plot against My doctrine, consentient with that of all the prophets, concerning that kingdom; it would to others be unsuitable, *it cannot be* (οὐκ ἐνδέχεται, comp. ch. xvii. 1) *otherwise,* than that *a prophet* (even every one) must perish there, and not elsewhere!" It is to be observed that as the Lord had in Nazareth involved His own lot with that of all the rejected prophets, so now He assumes the same position at the close:—partly in humility, partly in love, which would thus, as it were, conceal the heavier guilt of their putting Himself to death, as the

[1] That is, "on the way of My work." Thus it is not necessary to insert, with the Peschito, an ἐργάζεσθαι after αὔριον—as Neander thinks the complete sense requires.

Messiah and the Son; but it also infolds that truth to which, as the ground of His future teaching, His own lips must bear witness, that before His death He occupied preeminently the prophetic office to testify concerning Himself, in order to consummate and close the prophetic position and function. If it be asked why the Lord did not think of John, the prophet whom Herod had put to death out of Jerusalem, the answer is at hand, that He does thus remind them of this recent exception, as if He should say:—"Herod has indeed put the Baptist to death, anticipating and preventing your appropriate act, but that was a specific case, against the will and course of things, an exception which will not affect My fate; the rule will be exemplified in My person at Jerusalem."

Vers. 34, 35. We have already given our opinion upon the light and venial doubt which has been raised, as to whether or not the Evangelist Luke merely incorporated these words,—which in St Matthew form the final and solemn farewell of our Lord,—because of the connection of their subject with the present.[1] But now more directly considering the words, we are led to decide, more explicitly than before, that the Lord did at this earlier time actually utter these words. Can we suppose that St Luke did not indeed know to what place they belonged, or that the guidance of the Holy Spirit would not have shown him the impropriety of placing them here, *if* the Lord only spake them once, and at the solemn close? We can, indeed, perfectly well understand how Jesus, contemplating in His prophetic glance all that impended over Him in Jerusalem, should have broken out in such a cry as this, a cry which afterwards, when its sad presentiment was fulfilled, was once more uttered and recorded.[2] The sense remains on the whole the same as we have expounded it in St Matthew; and the comprehensive glance over all the prophetical missions and invitations down to this last and greatest, makes its connection with the preceding verse very plain.[3] But

[1] Hence many decide, without further ado, that the words belong not here, as *e.g.*, Grotius, Meyer, de Wette, Schleiermacher, Neander.

[2] This meets Schleiermacher's objection, that such an address to Jerusalem would be unlikely in Galilee.

[3] But we must be on our guard against the trifling which sometimes connects the *fox* and the *hen*.

the latter clause, concerning the house left, and the seeing Him again, must naturally have a modified sense here, receiving afterwards its new meaning; and there are many examples of such wider application of earlier sayings. It is admitted by most that ἔρημος, which would indeed only suit that future farewell and departure, is not here the true reading; the omission of this here is as significant as the absence likewise of ἀπ' ἄρτι. The Lord *now* only says—*Your house*, around which the children of Jerusalem were gathering for the feast, but not gathering around Me, who have so often there taught and solicited them,[1] —behold, *I leave it to you*, that is, soon to receive its full doom, but now for the present I come not to-day or to-morrow into the temple. Consequently, further,—Ye shall, for this time, see Me and hear Me first in your midst *at the feast*. It is wrong, however, to forget that the whole of vers. 34, 35 is an address to the inhabitants of Jerusalem in common; and thence to refer the last *ye* again to these Pharisees—"Ye shall first see Me, when we meet once more at the feast." That is a very inadequate explanation of the great hosanna-cry, which neither these nor any other Pharisees uplifted to greet Him; it is rather the Lord's purpose to predict here His final entrance, which He had in Zechariah before His eyes: "O Jerusalem, thou wilt receive Me once more, for it is so decreed, as *Him that cometh* (of whom all the prophets have spoken); thou must festally and solemnly receive, as sent unto thee in the highest sense,—and then crucify, Me!" The prospective allusion to this joyful greeting in the far distant futurity, in the same expression as St Matthew's repetition uses, is assuredly based upon its *type* in this first hosanna.

And now let the whole reply be glanced over again, in all its richness of meaning:—how the Lord exhibits in few words His own perfect knowledge of man, instantly detecting the true fox —the precision and boldness of His instantaneous rejoinder—the scorn which meets the cunning, the brief severity with which He treats the hypocrites—the holy serenity which pervades the whole, undisturbed in His firm prosecution of His conscious way —the piercing energy of this denunciation, in connection with

[1] For οἶκος is obviously here *the temple*—and does not, as Stein most whimsically interprets, signify "all which pertains to the happiness of family and public life"

the tenderness of His lamenting love, preserved down to the very end of His toiling, long-suffering life—finally, the sublimity of that prophetical glance, with which He surveys as well the history of the past, as the process of His own life and death, and in ver. 35 anticipates the last and most glorious scenes of all.

A SECOND SABBATH-HEALING.

(Luke xiv. 3, 5 [Matt. xii. 10, 11.])

Whether this second conflict of our Lord with the Pharisees on occasion of His healing on the Sabbath, a conflict which exhibits a deportment on His part very similar to that maintained on other occasions, but which bears essential marks of being a distinct occurrence, is to be placed in chronological sequence after the denunciatory discourses of chaps. xi. and xii., is a question which is still open to discussion. The mere position of the account does not enable us to determine positively in the affirmative; though the section cannot be assigned to a *later* period of the last journey (similarly with the whole of chs. xiv.–xvi.), for the Lord appears now to have leisure for visiting houses and imparting instruction. Grotius assumes, entirely without foundation, that the host was a member of the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem; St Luke simply describes him as an ἄρχων (of some sort), who, like most such, was of the sect of the Pharisees.[1] Even after such rigorous denunciations, so rigorous that they might have seemed to be an anticipation of His final renunciation of them all, the Lord is seen to be still ready to accept the invitations of these worse than Publicans to their tables; and when they exhibit their malignity He can all the more unrestrainedly confront and correct them with the simplicity of truth and love. If we bind closely together vers. 1 and 2, it might be thought

[1] Or as a Pharisee who at the same time was an ἄρχων. Thus only can we translate it, and in no case regard τῶν Φαρισαίων as rigidly dependent upon ἄρχων; for the Pharisees, as such, had no official leaders, or heads, none at least who are called ἄρχοντες in the New Testament.

probable that the sick man was brought by the Pharisees for the express purpose that they might test the Lord—see what He would do on the sabbath day, or possibly whether His power was equal to the curing of this dropsical man. In such a case, the kindness of the Physician towards a man who suffered himself to be thus misused, comes out into still greater prominence. But the ἦν ἔμπροσθεν αὐτοῦ does not indicate of itself anything more than a coincidence; and thus the Lord, notwithstanding the παρατηρεῖν of which He was well aware, at once heals the sick man who appeared in His presence. The καὶ ἦν disproves Pfenninger's notion that the man had been brought in consequence of a sympathising inquiry; it is much more obvious to suppose that before the sitting down (ver. 7), at the approach and in the act of coming into the house (ver. 1), the sick man had presented himself as a petitioner in the fore-court. We must then regard the παρατηρούμενοι as surrounding and observing Him from the very beginning. Suffice that St Luke designs to tell us that even here, as soon as a sick man comes before Him, the Lord is ready to help. On this occasion He anticipates the polemical question which had so often been put, just in the way in which, *e.g.*, Matt. xii. 10, His enemies had put it to Him; and in the manner in which He simply proposes the question it is already answered. There are many such *questions*, the mere proposal of which puts all gainsayers to *silence*, which we ourselves need only to propose, if we have also the simplicity of victorious truth on our side.

The illustration of an ox fallen into a pit or well might be thought to have some correspondence with the malady by which this man was perishing, just as before the binding and loosing the animal might have been chosen with reference to the woman's being bound;—but the circumstance in itself was of general proverbial significance. The reading υἱός which Rettig defends in Stud. u. Krit. (1838-4), and which, if genuine, would require ἢ βοῦς to be regarded as a spurious and unapt addition, is, in itself, despite all critical authority, so inappropriate that we cannot admit it; we cannot suppose that Jesus would require it of these heartless Pharisees, without any qualification, that they should treat every stranger to them with the same love which they would feel towards their own children! That would be quite

discordant with His constant custom, which was to enter into the position and adapt Himself to the character of those with whom He contended, for their keen conviction; and Olshausen is right in saying that we must assume here the same conclusion *a minori ad majus*, from an animal to a man, which holds good in analogous sayings. The strange juxtaposition of "son and ox" Rettig himself cannot admit;[1] on the other hand that of "ox or ass" is warranted by Ex. xxi. 33, which appears to be the essential foundation of such a proverbial expression as found also in the Talmud, comp. Deut. xxii. 4. Should it not be as *lawful* to do that in love to a poor man which selfishness would do for these two most useful beasts—as lawful as to provide entertainment and receive guests on the sabbath day? Is not this rather commanded by the very nature of the sabbath, instituted as it was by God's love, for the cure of man's whole nature?—Before, they *kept silence*, because they *would* not give any answer; but now it is yet more emphatic—They *could* not! No man among them was shameless or irrational enough to reply—I would not do even that, but rather let my ox or my ass remain! or—That would be a very much more important matter, the case of a most useful beast! or even—That would be less an act of labour than this of thy healing!

THE UNGROUNDED PRETENSIONS OF PROUD PHARISEES AND UNREFLECTING FOLLOWERS REPELLED. THREE PARABLES TWICE OVER: THE BEING INVITED, OUR OWN INVITING, AND THE REFUSING GUESTS; THE REQUIREMENTS OF DISCIPLESHIP, THE TRUE ABILITY BOTH FOR BUILDING AND WARFARE.

(Luke xiv. 8–35 [Matt. xxiii. 12, xxii. 2–9, x. 37, 38]).

Here, too, we have not merely a real, but also a chronological connection: chap. xv. 1 first introduces a new scene, without

[1] Sepp, indeed, quotes (ii. 337) in favour of this reading, a similar saying from the Bava Kama 5, 6. (If an ox or ass, son or daughter, man-servant or maid, fall into a well)—but even there the pair is not so coupled precisely, and if it were, we have no right to insert into the New Testament a later Jewish tradition.

stricter definition of time. The formula *συνεπορεύοντο δὲ αὐτῷ ὄχλοι πολλοί might* indeed be taken as beginning anew with the same indefiniteness as *ἦσαν δὲ ἐγγίζοντες αὐτῷ*,[1] chap xv. 1, but the matter of His sayings, when viewed by a correct spirit of exposition, forbids us to assume any such loose connection. The Lord evidently continues to speak to the people in the same strain which He had begun at the meal just left; He repels, in ver. 26, those who thoughtlessly followed Him, just as He had before repelled the unwarranted claim to "eat bread in the kingdom of God." We, therefore, do well to embrace the whole section, as including all that was said both within and without the house, under the one concise theme—*Rejection of unfounded pretensions*, see ver. 15, in the middle of the whole. The Lord abases *proud Pharisees*, who were unjustifiably confident of the Kingdom of God; and also *thoughtless adherents* from among the people, who regarded His discipleship as an unwarrantably light matter. This gives us two co-ordinate portions of the discourse, which correspond in their plan and treatment. We have *three parables* for the abasement of the Pharisees in connection with the feast, and then again *three parables* for the warning repulsion of the unthinking crowds, spoken on leaving the feast. And we can hardly think that it was St Luke only who thus blended them in such symmetry.

Still more precisely, in each case we perceive two conjunct similitudes in connection with a third. In the former part there are two *preparatory* lessons (so to speak) given in similitudes which spring directly from the feast, and afterwards the *consummating* third similitude, which is evoked by the direct expression given to the unfounded pretensions in ver. 15. The first parable of all, springing directly from an obvious occasion given, and already seizing the ultimate principle which gave it here its force, is directed against the pride of *the invited*, and therefore spoken to the guests. The counsels here given, seeming as they do to exhibit common prudential maxims of life—Be not proud, lest thou be put to shame! Be rather lowly, so shalt thou be honoured! are suddenly, in the more wide-extended

[1] As Scheibel argues, who denies any connection throughout chaps. xiv.–xvi. Das Abendmahl des Herrn, s. 118.

concluding lesson of ver. 11, so deepened and spiritualised, that they in themselves appear obviously to condemn the pharisaical *pride* of the Jews in relation to the kingdom of God, just as in Matt. xxiii. 12. The second parable, vers. 12–14, is then added, without any external challenge, and as a counterpart of the former; directed against selfishness in the *party inviting*, and, therefore, addressed to him who bade Him and the other guests: —Bid not with selfish aims, but in the spirit of active benevolence, and with reference to the future recompense! In this is condemned by a figure the *selfishness* of the Jews with regard to love of their neighbour, springing from their practical ignorance of the mercy of God; and its conclusion, ver. 14, gives it plainly to be understood that only the righteous, and not all the Jews as such, will attain unto a happy resurrection. When, at this point, the idly-devout cry of ver. 15, interrupts His words, softening down if not directly opposing their intensely earnest application, with a tacit assumption that the eating bread in the kingdom of God would be the prerogative of all Israelites, and preeminently of all the Pharisees—the Lord proceeds, according to His wont, to make this stone of stumbling thrown in His way a foundation for a further, and still more explicit, declaration. Hence the third parable, vers. 16–24. "Verily, ye are all bidden to the supper of God; but because those who were bidden cling to self and the world, instead of truly *coming* in the prescribed way of repentance and faith, therefore they will not taste the bread of the kingdom of God, but others in their place!" The concluding lesson, ver. 24, passes directly to the undisguised interpretation of the whole.

The Lord has gone out, and the crowding multitudes, the ὄχλοι πολλοί seem to say that *they* were disposed to receive the invitation aright, and *come* to the supper as required. But He sees through them; and, continuing the same train of thought, once more begins to utter the language of repulsion, humbling and teaching those who throng to Him from the people. We have, again, *two* yet more general preparatory similitudes teaching the great requirements of His discipleship; the *third* then supplements them, as a warning against that apostasy which is the certain issue of such spurious or half discipleship. In this case the *instruction*, as we might have expected, comes first in

unfigurative words,—In order to be My disciples, it is requisite that the dearest objects should be renounced, ver. 26, and the Divine discipline voluntarily submitted to, ver. 27. Both these lessons are illustrated in two co-ordinate parables concerning *building* and *warfare*, which do not by any means (as our exposition will show) mean one and the same thing, but have a progressive idea in their signification. In the *building* of conversion, the only true counting of the cost is—that a man should see his own absolute incompetence and emptiness (or renounce everything); the retaining of any by-love, such as would hinder its completion, being a *humiliating* and disgraceful half-work! Vers. 28–30. In the *conflict*—inseparable from a continuance in discipleship—with God who layeth His "cross" upon us, in order to our furtherance and preservation, the only wise condition of peace with the Almighty One is—that a man should see his own feebleness, and voluntarily submit, vers. 31, 32. That all this may be perfectly understood, ver. 33 follows, with a plain lesson at the close like that at the beginning—To renounce all that a man hath is the material for building, to pray for peace is the real might in warfare! Finally, in vers. 34, 35 we have the *third*, conclusive similitude of the worthless salt, which cannot be made good again, and is fit for nothing but—to be *cast out* (and trodden under foot); and this concludes by the strongest utterance of that fundamental idea of *humiliation* and *disgrace* which has pervaded our Lord's warnings from ver. 8 downwards.

Vers. 8, 10. With the malignant παρατηρεῖν of the Pharisees corresponds the gracious ἐπέχειν of the Redeemer and Physician of souls to all that comes before His attention:—He pays special attention to the deportment of the guests in taking their places, wherein was most plainly brought to light the deplorable baseness of their spirit. After, as we may suppose, a long and beautiful grace, a most petty contention arises about their several seats and dignity; for the excellent custom of assigning beforehand to guests their respective places had not yet been established.

Thus unworthily to be seeking their own honour on the sabbath day, and that, too, in the presence of the Holy One of God, whom it had been their design to entrap and abase, at once lays these crafty assailants open to His censure, exhibits their character precisely as He denounced it in chap. xx. 46, and gives Him a vantage-ground for beginning the attack in a manner which would be likely to disconcert their plans. The Lord avoids the appearance of assuming an unseasonable tone, and uttering lessons designedly prepared for the assembly: He simply lays hold of the circumstances of the moment, according to His custom ever to seize humanity in its external exhibition of itself, and to illustrate and pass sentence upon the internal dispositions which the external act betrays.[1] St Luke introduces the Lord's word at the outset as a *παραβολή*, the form which would best correspond with the decorous instruction of a guest at a feast, and this at the same time hints at the profound spiritual application which comes out so impressively at the conclusion, ver. 11; one might almost say that the Saviour now essays to heal that far worse than bodily dropsy, the inflation of pride, the dropsy of the heart, in these miserable men.[2]

When *thou* art bidden—simply the ordinary form of speech, which does not involve the necessity of embarrassing the subject by insignificant inquiries as to the individual person addressed. Did He speak to him who stood nearest, or to the chief person present, in direct condemnation; or conversely to one who modestly remained below for his encouragement? Nothing of the kind, but as St Luke correctly and plainly writes—*πρὸς τοὺς κεκλημένους, πρὸς αὐτούς*. The *scriptural* foundation of this מְשָׁל, which is not limited to the Jews or to the East (which

[1] Schleiermacher: "The dignity of these words appears in this, that without any appearance of profoundness or severity, they lay bare the secret disposition lying at the foundation of the external behaviour which they condemn."

[2] Kleuker: "The morbid and restless desire of the creature in his vanity for the better place." To what lengths this drove the later Jewish scribes, many evidences show. Simeon Ben Schetach, invited by King Jannæus, placed himself between the king and the queen. Being asked why he did so, his reply was that it was written—Wisdom maketh him to sit among great men (Ecclus. xi. 1, comp. Prov. iv. 8). This circumstance is found in Hieros. Berachoth fol. ii. 2.

even appears in Baron von Knigge, and in Alberti's Komplimentirbuch), but which our Lord has illustrated in its profoundest meaning, is Prov. xxv. 6, 7; comp. in Ecclus. i. 29, though the son of Sirach elsewhere omitted this among the rules of his guests. The warning, moreover, places the evil in the strongest light by addressing the least modest, who at once took possession of *τὴν πρωτοκλισίαν*, the one preeminent seat, with which afterwards *τὸν ἔσχατον τόπον* is strictly parallel. When, therefore, some more honourable personage comes in at a later hour,—for here also the most eminent ones seem to regard it as dignified to come in last,—he who bade not only *thee* with thy pride, but him *also*, will naturally say, and without much circumlocution (without even the prefatory *φίλε* which greets the humble man)—Make place for this man, as it is fit! and as of course it is not to be supposed that the whole company would rise and make a general movement downward, nothing remains but that thou take the lowest place as the result of thy impropriety! and that, too, very properly, with shame and disgrace! The shame which does not attach to the mere sitting below, falls upon him who is sent down from a higher place; and that is finely intimated in the *ἄρξῃ*. If it is thy aim to have honour in the presence of the company, it should be thy prudence so to act as to be sent upwards rather—thus would thy aim be better secured. This might seem at first to be a mere common rule of discretion, which approves and confirms the desire for honourable place; but it appears so only until we mark the application of the parable to the final and essential allotment of our place in the supper of the kingdom of God—for the third parable, ver. 16, is thus really prepared for in this first. And it is also quite right when rightly understood—though the *ἵνα* in the application must not be overmuch pressed—to abase the *κενοδοξία* by seeking the true *δόξα*—If thou wilt be the first, then be the last! The Lord's gracious wisdom reminds us poor mortals of those frequent *humiliations* which arise in the external relations of our earthly life, as if for types and warnings. How often is something similar to this occurring; one who thinks himself great meeting with one still greater of whom he thought not, and before whom he must recede: but how ineffectual generally are these humiliations in abasing pride, which still

seeks other methods of exaltation, masked with yet finer subtilty! Our polished guests, under similar circumstances, act very differently from those grovelling Pharisees, ver. 7; they adopt, in their sense, the Lord's counsel, and seek for honour with hypocritical humility. How often is this seen even in the ordinances of religion, even at the holy Supper of the Lord; the same spirit being exhibited under a disguised expression, which, in a thousand forms shows, in daily life, its undissembled eagerness to obtain the πρωτοκλισία. And the sentence with which our Lord closes is ever receiving a manifold fulfilment.

Ver. 11. The exaltation of self was at that time the essential spirit of the Pharisees, and of the whole people with them; as it is of all men generally under the influence of their inborn pride. This foolish, unprofitable, and disappointed striving is exhibited everywhere in human affairs before the presence of men:—every one desires naturally the uppermost place, at least relatively to others seeking τὰς πρωτοκλισίας, and forgetting in that passion the rights of this or that ἐντιμότερος than himself. Although the Lord, speaking directly of these external things, does not intend to be understood as levelling all distinction, but rather *confirms* the outward proprieties of higher and lower in human life; yet does He take occasion to denounce the blinded folly which *seeks* in such externalities a vain honour instead of the true, and in such a frivolous and contemptible way as to need no deprivation of its object to put it to shame. But fundamentally all place, and position, and title are alike petty and external. As, however, man's internal pride is manifested in these things before man, so is it more emphatically *before God;* He knows the abject ones who cringe before their fellows, and the indolent who care nothing about higher or lower, provided only they have their share, both alike utterly regardless of their abasement before the Supreme. He knows every publican and sinner who exalts himself above other publicans and sinners worse than himself! and it is to this that the closing saying of the parable points;—that profound declaration which we have already contemplated on Matt. xxiii. 12, and which we shall soon hear again in a most impressive connection (chap. xviii. 14). That he who presses forward is repelled, he who humbly retires is advanced; that pride is abased, and humility exalted; is one

great antithetical fact, which is pretypified in ten thousand ways in human life, and will have its eternal consummation in every soul at the last day. On the one side stands the Lord Jesus Christ,[1] according to Phil. ii. 8, 9; and on the other that first of all sons of pride, in whom, according to Isa. xiv. 13–15, this parable had its first and most awful fulfilment. Choose then, O man, between the way of Christ and the way of Satan!

Vers. 12–14. The excellent John Newton[2] condemned most vehemently the vain parties and feasts of Christian people; appealing to Luke xiv. 12–14 as a passage of Scripture which few seemed to regard as a portion of holy writ, and which was more neglected than any other:—but such sentiments rest upon a very superficial exposition of the letter. More perverted, however, were the theory and practice of the enthusiastic Müller of Bristol,[3] who for more than thirteen years acted literally on the injunction of Rom. xiii. 8, and thought that every man who willed to perform the commandments of God, according to John vii. 17, would be inwardly convinced that every injunction in the Sermon on the Mount must be understood *literally*, in the strictest sense. But, after all, this is in any case the least which our Lord designed to say here—that we should rather invite the poor and the maimed than our own friends, neighbours, and relatives to our feasts; indeed, the rigid literal fulfilment of this parabolical commandment, given to be understood by us in its spirit, would involve an unjust contravention of the instincts of love and propriety—just as we have had occasion to see on several earlier occasions. Schleiermacher, therefore, has something like right when he says—"this would be to subvert the natural procedure of all social life!" Bengel's remark is simple and excellent—Jesus invitationes ex necessitudine naturali et civili quasi *suo loco relinquit*, ipse meliores præcipit. Humanitatis officia non plane tollit. The "not" may be here, as often, taken as *not so much, not only;* and, generally speaking, the

[1] To whom no man assigned in this feast the seat of honour. He waits calmly to occupy the place which will be His, and meanwhile speaks in the midst of their tumultuous striving a few words of penetrating truth.

[2] In his very edifying letters, several times issued in German.

[3] See Des Herrn Führungen im Lebensgange des Georg. F. Müller, von ihm selbst geschrieben. Stuttgart bei Liesching 1844.

whole form of expression has a proverbial character, pointing to the internal disposition with the illustration of a striking example;—see the right interpretation on Matt. v. 46, 47; Luke vi. 32–34. Nor can we agree with Ebrard, that there is no blame here intended to the host, but only to the guests as intending to return the entertainment; and that the entertainer had bidden Jesus with a good intention, and without any relative or neighbour. Ver. 1 makes this very questionable; the Lord graciously leaves uninvestigated the design in which He Himself was bidden, but we must assuredly assume from the whole character of the feast that the host required such an exhortation as he received, to expend in a better manner his hospitality and generosity. There must have been friends and kinsfolk in abundance, or otherwise the Lord's address would have been altogether unseasonable and misapplied; and indeed the general claim laid to the best seats proves of itself that rich and distinguished neighbours were not wanting there.

The Lord designedly sets out with the double designation *ἄριστον ἢ δεῖπνον*, including them both afterwards under the general *δοχή* of any kind; and the *φίλους* connects itself strikingly with the *φίλε* of the previous parable. There it was assumed as the common rule, that the giver of a feast should have his friends for guests; but now the discourse reaches suddenly beyond.—"But properly these should not so much as the poor and the needy be bidden." The gradation of the guests, as alas they are generally invited and present, proceeds from the nearest outwards. The *φίλοι* are partly to be taken as a general comprehensive designation, and partly as rightly taking precedence of relatives: *ἀδελφοί* indicates a nearer relationship than *συγγενεῖς*; but finally come the neighbours, yet *nota bene* only if they are *rich*. It has been thought desirable—though with some violence to the diction, since the *τοὺς* and the *σοῦ* are wanting in connection with *γείτονας*—to refer *πλουσίους* to the whole series together, since to bid the *poor* relations, and thus acknowledge the rights of their kinship, could not but be an excellent thing. But the general tone of the whole discourse forbids us thus to press its individual words. It was no harm in Tobit that he said to his son—Go and bring what poor man soever thou shalt find out of our brethren, who is mindful of the Lord (or in the Greek *ὃν ἂν*

εὕρῃς τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἡμῶν ἐνδεῆ). The Lord condemns here only the selfish disposition which has the expected return in view; and estimating the φίλους by that standard, counts many to be such who are altogether without love! He therefore refers to the laws of Moses, with all their inculcation of charity in festal feasts and rejoicings; such as Deut. xiv. 28, 29, xvi. 11, xxvi. 11–13, comp. Heb. viii. 10, and the saying constructed from them, in Ecclus. xiv. 14. The motive of our Lord's counsel explains at once its true meaning—*lest they also* bid thee again, and thou shouldst thus seek to possess thy wrong recompense! This μήποτε is precisely the same as in ver. 8. For the temporal recompense is to be feared and avoided similarly with the humiliation in the former case. Metus mundo ignotus, as Bengel irronically adds. Ἀντικαλεῖν appears to be the term which corresponds to our reciprocation of favour; but he who has the ability and the disposition to spread a table for others should not remain within the circle which selfish calculation prescribes, Matt. v. 46, but remember that infinitely better recompense, which is held forth not indeed as a mere ἀνταπόδομα, but in the high declaration—μακάριος ἔσῃ.[1] The reference to *eternal* recompense is lawful and right; we may not say (with Schleiermacher) that there is a gleam of irony passing from ver. 12 into the ἀνταποδοθήσεται of ver. 13; for the Lord's words are here sublimely real and earnest, when He finally points forwards to the *resurrection*, He declares what is the goal of honour and reward to which He had referred from the beginning, using the orthodox and current language of the people, and of the Pharisees. But when the "resurrection *of the just*" is appealed to as evidence of His confirmation of the doctrine of a *first* resurrection,[2] we must demur; that is not the immediate meaning of His words, they contain merely an intimation that only the righteous will rise to a *blessed* resurrection of *recompense;* as we understand also in John v. 29 the resurrection of life. Comp. on Luke xx. 35, Vol. iii.

[1] Braune overlooks this ἔσῃ in the original, when he applies the German translation—so *bist* du selig! to the present blessedness of giving and showing charity.

[2] The Irvingite exegesis naturally enough lays hold of this—see Ueber den Rathschluss u. s. w. II. 60.

And now interposes a guest with his interesting saying, ver. 15. We hesitate to admit that he was actually much impressed (as Bengel understands the ἀκούσας,—audiens, eoque tactus); or (as Braune thinks) that his "elevated feeling, sensible of the incongruities and follies of the prevalent customs, is susceptible only to the blessedness and freedom of the children of God;" or that he uttered (as Olshausen has it) his "joyful enthusiasm;" for the Lord would not then have replied so severely to the well-intended utterance of his earnest emotion as we find He did:—We must gather the internal meaning of such a word spoken to Jesus from the answer which He immediately made to this man himself, as appropriate to his own case. The man was disposed rather, as we prefer to think, to purify the atmosphere, overcharged by the two former parables; and to say something edifying which would not give offence to any party. His aim was partly to redeem the rest of the company from their utter silence; and partly to put an end to the too intense spirit of moralising, by something benignant of his own. His words, however piously they sound, contain a threefold latent impropriety:—first, his sensual conception of the resurrection of the just, the φαγεῖν ἄρτον in the kingdom of God being used without any qualification, just as the Evangelist in ver. 1 had used it to describe the present meal;[1] then the confident assurance of his pretensions to eat it as a Pharisee and an Israelite, knowing nothing of ch. xiii. 28, 29, overlooking or pretermitting the little word δικαίων in ver. 14; finally, his indolent, contented remission of the matter into distant futurity, thus bringing the too rigorous and critical exhortation to a close. He sits complacently at his kinsman's feast, and prattles about the heavenly table. The Lord says—*Blessed* wilt thou be, rather, if thou doest good to the poor; and the man immediately appropriates the words, and gives them another turn in his pious way of talking—Yea, verily, we shall all be happy indeed, when we have once entered there! (Meanwhile let us enjoy ourselves here without too much of such discourse.) The cry, indeed, uttered with a better meaning and higher intelligence is perfectly cor-

[1] Too boldly expressed by Bahrdt—happy for him who lives to *feast* in the kingdom of God.

rect, and fundamentally in harmony with Rev. xix. 9. Hence Joh. von Müller, himself genuinely moved by it, remarks—"what blessedness, even to feel this!" It is a foretaste of that future blessedness, to be able thus to anticipate it.

Vers. 16, 17. But since this pious spokesman of the whole company is, alas, far from uttering a well-grounded claim to the participation of the supper of God, the Lord makes His words the foundation of a yet more severe continuation of His own discourse, instead of being silenced by them. As to the relation of this parable to its later variation, Matt. xxii. 2–14, we have said what was necessary there. The Lord speaks here, throughout the parable as a whole, more gently and in a more concealed tone, than in St Matthew; but the conclusion in ver. 24 is all the more plain, emphatic, and piercing. The one *servant*, who here carries the invitation, represents in a certain sense all the invitations of God in general and as one whole, and is, so to speak, the calling *voice* of God in itself, as uttered through all His messengers;[1] but yet it is conclusively the Son, the Messiah Himself, calling men to the kingdom of heaven; it is He Himself who now speaks, as is plainly shown in the expression —*at the hour* of supper. The great essential is *coming* in penitence, faith, and good works, when the invitation is given; the *being invited* is nothing in itself. The point is to come *now*, and not with spurious devotion to talk about a future blessedness; for the hour, the time of coming, and entering, and eating, is already now. He who will not come now, will then be left without; the keen point of the word of invitation lies in the hasteful summons —All things are *now* ready! The gracious Host tarries not, admits no question whether He will be pleased to wait till tomorrow or the next day. Finally, what boundless matter of exposition and preaching in the *all things* which the Lord had made ready for those whom He calls.

Vers. 18–20. *All* began with one consent to excuse themselves from obeying the gracious and earnest—Come! None of those who were bidden came; hence again at the close—*None* of them shall taste of My supper. Consequently it is manifest that the πολλοί who were called according to ver. 16, are only those

[1] Roos, "the company of all the preachers of the Gospel."

of whom this can be said; not, therefore, as elsewhere, all Israel, or the collective number of all who were to be called through out the world:—this more restricted view which pervades the parable is to be carefully observed. Its ἀνδρὲς ἐκεῖνοι οἱ κεκλημένοι are such as were specifically and preeminently, primo loco and in preference to others, *the called* of the kingdom of heaven; such as, in virtue of their position, endowments, understanding, and responsibilities, occupied the same relation to the people of Israel which these occupied to the heathen—the Scribes, Pharisees, and Rulers, as the leaders and representatives of the people at large. We might say without much danger of error—"the representatives of the theocracy," of whom *not one* believed on Jesus, according to Jno. vii. 48. We must not, however, overlook the other side of the question, which, in reference to the relation between ver. 14 and ver. 15, should be made very prominent,—that these representatives and leaders regard themselves as the "just" and as righteous, the rich and the whole in contrast with the poor and the maimed, as we shall see on ver. 21. These had gladly accepted the invitation which is presupposed, ver. 16, as having preceded; they have prided themselves on being the certain and honoured guests, and have acted as if they expected nothing better than the final happy summons to the enjoyment of the feast:—and yet *they come not!* It now happens just as they themselves avow in John vii. 48, and as the Lord here announces it as well-known;—they began (and continued stedfast to the end, from the first to the last) to excuse themselves ἀπὸ μιᾶς, understand γνώμης or φωνῆς, with one mind and one voice. Not merely ἀπὸ μιᾶς παραιτήσεως, pariter et simul; but it is intimated also, that with all the variety of their apologies as they now follow, their refusal is one and the same, as if they had all concerted it. And wherefore so? The true meaning, the innermost principle of the preaching which invited them to *come*, and which is here only represented in its gracious aspect as the gospel of good tidings, is implied and understood, though unexpressed, to be—Repentance and Conversion; and this is what they unanimously decline. They know this well, they understand the prophets' שׁוּבוּ אֶל־יְהוָה and the Baptist's and Christ's μετανοεῖτε, well enough to turn

from them: therefore nothing more explicit needed to be said to these wise ones.

We must now further inquire into the specific meaning and specific distinction intended to be expressed by the *threefold* refusal; and it is melancholy to observe how seldom in sermons or in expositions the distinctive significance of the three answers is retained, well-known and almost proverbial as the section is in Christendom. This much in general is clear at the outset, that the ground of the first is opposed to the heavenly inheritance, as a whole, while the oxen of the second are contrasted with the attainment and possession of better substance in detail; and that the marriage joy of the third is intended to be set in opposition to the true eternal happiness of God's kingdom and God's supper. Thus we have most obviously a *dichotomy* presented to us—the *good things* and the *enjoyments* of this world, its riches and its pleasure, are the things which withhold those from coming who are dependent upon them. The earthly mind will not part with the morsel in the mouth out of regard to that which is promised of God; prefers the fleshpots of Egypt to the manna pledged in abundance; the husks which now fill the belly to the ample provision of bread which abounds even for the servants in the Father's house; counts the pottage of lentils of more worth, as pacifying the present appetite, than the first-born prerogative which must wait for an inheritance in the future. Now-a-days men speak loftily of "material interests;" and the endless schemes of invention and industry, by which arts are improved or wealth is gained, allow but little time or inclination for seeking reconciliation with God, or the way to heaven. Similarly, in this parable the two former recusants have the appearance of something like laudable occupation to plead:—such respectable *men of business* must forsooth be excused when God summons, for this world demands their most sedulous attention and most thrifty devotion of time, in its manifold exactions.[1] So also the learned, and even the learned in

[1] Are we to regard the ground bought without being seen as an indication of covetousness, Isa. v. 8? We doubt it, and would rather regard the purchase as a conditional one—the ἰδεῖν being equivalent to δοκιμάσαι. But we would not positively decide.

divinity, have their profoundly important investigations in hand, their intricate questions which they must go to prove. Alas, poor sinner! investigate, prove, and test thy own heart, rather than thy fields, thy oxen, thy documents ancient or new! Ponder in thy soul the fact that thou art thyself, with all thy effort and toil, only as an ox bearing the hard yoke, so long as the answer given to the great invitation is—I *must* do this or that, I *must* and can do no other! But to both these, who thus have the excuse of something to *do*, is opposed now the other who has something to *enjoy* as his apology:—he has married a wife, and in her he finds his field and oxen, and everything; independently of her he knows, thinks of, and cares for, nothing just now. Probably it was but for one object that he married at all; without having any piece of land of his own, without knowing or caring how any family might be provided for after his marriage;[1] but that troubles him not now, he is without disquiet and perfectly content. Such are the thorough men of the world, from the highest in rank down to the most squalid, who are bending all their energies to attain the pleasure (or the pain!) of the moment; and are ready with their irritable *I cannot!* whenever the servant of God brings home to them the instant appeal. To the one the wide world is his bride, in whose broad arms he thinks himself happy; while the other weds his little fragment. Why dost thou not come *with* thy wife, if susceptible of heavenly things; or, if she is not, without her?

This gives us the twofold refusal, as it obviously lies before us; but three are specifically mentioned—how, then, are the two former distinguished? First of all, we find on a calm and simple inspection of the whole, that there is a progression of contradiction and refusal to accept the invitation—each being more decisive and infatuated than the former. The first speaks in the most courteous manner, and, so far as the gentle request to be excused goes, is mechanically followed by the second in a tone far too common and too dangerous; his ἔχω ἀνάγκην is set against the careful ἀναγκάζειν of the servant (ver. 23, which is

[1] The question here is not of hindrance through marriage generally (I am married!), but of the first tumult of wedded passion as the type of all carnal enjoyment. This man did not lose his freedom through his wife, save as it was his strong will to lose it.

not the case with regard to the first rejecters), and thus his ἐρωτῶ σε has at least some specious foundation, although with great impropriety and with resolute selfwill he prefers to follow his own ἀνάγκη, never intending any other. The second dispatches the invitation somewhat more curtly—*I am going* now on my urgent way, and may not permit myself to be hindered; there rest my security and my pleasure; let that suffice. But the third, whose οὐ δύναμαι has only the specious sound of courtesy, says this essentially in a half mocking tone—I have a wedding and festal merriment of my own; no other is of any import to me; thou seest how it is, and mayest leave *me* content! For the Jews this would point back to the law of Moses, Deut. xxiv. 5; and the διὰ τοῦτο suggests an apparent reason which rendered the *request* to be excused unnecessary. And with this general view accords on the whole what an anonymous writer in the Kirchenfreund für das nördliche Deutschland (1839 Nr. 71) has suggested upon this exegetical problem; viz., that the distinguishing element of the three answers lies in the words which express the *inward disposition* of those who excuse themselves. So regarded, it is an external circumstance which imposes a necessity upon the first to decline; he allows himself to be ruled by this necessity, and it may be expected of him that, when the pressure of circumstances is withdrawn, he will yet come: the second yields with more readiness and complacency to the restraining difficulty, and does not feel disposed to surmount it: while the third, and most wilful, utters his scornful and harsh—I cannot do otherwise! There is a certain truth in this, but not the whole truth, nor does it full justice to the text: for the last οὐ δύναμαι is not so fundamentally to be distinguished from the first ἔχω ἀνάγκην as the expression of inner disposition, both resolving themselves into the middle term Tel est mon plaisir; and further, this essay is wrong and one-sided in finding the difference *only* in this, and in declaring that it is not to be sought, where it is commonly sought, in the distinctive circumstances which restrained the three parties. We have plainly seen that the *possessions* and the *pleasures* of the world are here distinguished; but there must also be a certain distinction between the two things which unite in expressing the former, for the Lord did not make this difference without a purpose.

Finally, then, how are the *piece of ground* and the *oxen*, as they together significantly exemplify the former, to be regarded in their dichotomy? This has long been, and still is, the question; and most marvellous have been the perversions of preachers and expositors in their dealing with it. Luther himself strangely erred when he regarded the former as the priests and spiritual guides, who say—We must cultivate the land, that is, govern the people; while the latter cling to worldly honour and consideration, *bulls* or oxen being in Ps. xxii. the earthly rulers among men!!. Others have reversed the order, and referring the three subjects to the three relations, civil, spiritual, and household, have made the oxen (though their *yokes* belong certainly to husbandry) animals destined to sacrificial purposes! The ingenious Herberger involves himself in the snare of his own ingenuity, when he is deluded into saying—"The Lord Jesus, *without doubt*, referred to three most eminent sects—the Essenes, who cultivated the land; the Pharisees, who were proud, despotic, violent oxen; and the Sadducees, who were altogether and obscenely carnal." These are specimens of error in the exposition which will dispose the reader to forego any further enumeration of them. And yet the true exposition lies palpably at hand! We have already shown that the piece of ground indicates possessions in this world generally and in mass, while the *oxen* correspond with individual property in detail—and this of itself might well satisfy the requirements of the subject. But this is not the only point in these full and pregnant similitudes;—what then is the most essential and fundamental distinction? The Lord Himself, as His own expositor, mentions it when He repeats the parable, Matt. xxii. 5, and places ἀγρός and ἐμπορία in connection with one another;—why then has not this been used as the key to the obscurity of our present passage? The second of the two has also his own piece of ground, and indeed that not a small one, for he can employ upon it no less than five yoke of oxen; the distinction, therefore, in the process of development in human life lies in this, that the former settles down contentedly in his estate, while the latter uses his heritage like a thrifty economist. Hence the full and significant classification which the Lord makes of the people of the world, refusing to come to the feast, by dividing them into—first, those who

rest in *property*, or rather, in this case, acquired possessions in the secure and joyful first feeling of possession;[1] then, such as are absorbed in commerce or *business*, for the increase of their property and its revenue; and, finally, those who, possibly without any possessions or anxiety about them, are enjoying themselves in inactive *pleasure*, simply as such. And with this well agrees the circumstance not remarked at first, that eager activity is first made *prominent* in the case of the second, in the πορεύομαι which does not brook being hindered, and in the laudable prudence of the δοκιμάσαι.

Finally, that we may not omit any trait in the parables, the requests to be excused depict in a very striking manner the half hypocritical, half wilful spirit of the two recusants of the former class, who use the same conventional form of speech in their refusal. On the one hand they admit, from their own internal feeling (and therein differing from the third), that their grounds of excuse are not in themselves essentially valid; therefore each says ἔχε με παρῃτημένον, treat me obligingly this time, let me pass as excused. On the other hand, *such* a style of speaking as the response to so glorious a summons to the feast of the King of heaven, betrays a certain tincture of scornfulness, almost as if it ran—I thank thee most obediently for thy offer of blessedness! Now, however affectionately the servants of God may execute their commission, and yield to the honest utterance of every sincere heart, it is beyond their instructions and their prerogative to grant *such* a prayer; the servant cannot have any one *excused*—all that he can do is, as we shall see, to *tell* his Lord what has been said to him.

Vers. 21–23. The fundamental ideas which are exhibited in the sudden turn which the words now take, and according to which the anger of the great Host against the despisers, passes over into boundless benevolence towards others in their stead, have been observed upon already at Matt. xxii.; but the distinctive characteristic element in the present parable consists in this,

[1] Which would decide what we left undecided before, that the ἰδεῖν is not equivalent to δοκιμάζειν, but is the joyous beholding of his own landed property now obtained, the first joy of *possession*. Sepp, however, goes astray when he speaks of the three impediments as—*pleasure* (in the country-seat bought for that purpose!), industry, and sensuality.

that substitutes are *twice* introduced here instead of those who were first called. Those who enter in, ver. 21, are not the heathens among the Jews, for the *city* is still, according to Matt. xxii. 7, Jerusalem and Israel,[1] but those among the people of Israel who were outside the circle of those self-complacent, satisfied, vainly-invited men; that is, the publicans and sinners of chap xv. 1, see Matt. xxi. 31. Their figurative description points back with verbal precision to ver. 13, in order thus to bind together the two similitudes, and in the third to give a retrospective hint for the interpretation of the second—Exercise benevolence towards the desolate and needy, even as God Himself does in the administration of His kingdom! Previously, the *poor*, generally, had been opposed to the *rich* neighbours; and then (in the place of the dear friends and kinsmen) *in specie* the halt, and lame, and blind, the wretched and the despised, whom a dignified great man would hardly like to place at his table; but the repetition of these expressions now, as borrowed from the former similitude, requires the explanation of a spiritual meaning —the spiritually poor and spiritually rich, who gladly and at once obey the call of God. Nor is the specific contrast with those other despisers, which is involved in the words, to be altogether rejected as trifling:—The poor have not bought land or oxen to demand their care, the blind cannot go to see and to prove anything, the lame cannot go so eagerly and intently here or there; finally, the maimed have no inducement and no ability to assist at the merriment of weddings. Such poor and wretched ones, or rather all such people who are to be found (*τοὺς πτωχοὺς κ.τ.λ.*), the servant brings in according to the commandment of his lord, finding them in all parts of the city where they are to be found—*ῥύμαι* are the smaller, narrower passages and alleys, where such people most abound: comp. Isa. xv. 3, where we have the same word in connection with *πλατείαις*. They come without any refusal, and the servant reports joyfully of his mes-

[1] Still less may we understand vers. 21 and 23 of a twofold calling of the Gentiles, as if first those who were nearer, and already shone upon by the light of revelation, were called; and then afterwards those who were further removed, locally and *morally!* (v. Gerlach.) So Roos: first the Romans and Greeks, then the Barbarians. But the text does not harmonise with this view.

sage accomplished; but he observes, and confidentially reports to his master, that *yet there is room.* The feast and the house are both on a great scale—and here we may think of the many empty places of the absent *many*, for whom all things had been ready; and still more of the large and liberal benevolence of the great Host. A precious expression is this ἔτι τόπος ἐστι for the riches of the compassion of God—especially when we note the point too often overlooked, that it is not the Lord Himself who utters it, but the servant, who knows his master's mind and his master's house full well, gives the assurance first, and his lord approving his words confirms them by repeating—that my house may be *filled!* Nec natura nec gratia patitur vacuum—remarks most beautifully the good Bengel once more. O that the proud Jews could have conceived of this amplitude of provision in the kingdom of God for all people! Those who are now called, ver. 23, are actually the heathen; and this only does St Matthew adduce. These are yet more wretched in their need, who lie homeless (in the sense of Eph. ii. 12) in the highways around the city, having their miserable lodgment under the shadow of the hedges. (Bengel—sepes mendicorum parietes.) The poverty and abasement of these may forbid them to believe, and their ruined abandonment might disincline them to accept the good tidings, that such as they are invited to the high feast—therefore they must be *compelled* to come in. Observe the significant progression in the character of the three invitations:—to the first called it is only simply *said* that the time was come, for more than that would be inappropriate after their long earlier calling: the poor and the infirm are graciously taken by the hand and *brought in*, this being absolutely needful in the case of the maimed, and halt, and blind, who would come, but hardly could: finally, there is the ἀναγκάζειν for all who were found without, in which the invitation now supplementarily triumphs over every false ἔχω ἀνάγκην (ver. 18) which might arise among those without. The perversion of this saying both in the theory and the practice of the church since Augustine explained and justified the compelle intrare by the incorrect and subtile thought—Foris inveniatur necessitas, ut intus nascatur voluntas! This willingness to come is not to be effected by any external and actual *compulsion;* nor does the Lord's saying speak of any such, for,

according to ver. 17, He would receive only those who *come* and come *voluntarily*. (Matt. xxii. 3.) As those who were brought in came in at the same time of themselves, so now, also, the invariable and indispensable εἰσελθεῖν is connected with the ἀνάγκαζον, in order to obviate any perversion. We must understand the word in the same sense as the παραβιάζεσθαι of Luke xxiv. 29, Acts xvi. 15, that is, of the urgent appeal and *supplication* which will not take refusal.[1] Where there is no proud and refractory refusal, but only, on the contrary, an excess of self-abasement, and the unbelief which that engenders, saying, "I am not worthy, nor can it be truth that I am invited, I *cannot* go in my beggar-garments to that high table—and even though this fundamental thought should be overlaid by the abject feeling which prefers the free living of the mendicant to the table of a king, the servant's reply is—"I cannot admit thy excuse, I cannot carry back such a message to my Lord, thou shouldst and thou must come! Thy misery must be no hindrance, such as thou art was I to bring! That thou abidest so complacently in thy misery, makes the matter much worse; but to such as thou art must I tell the whole unqualified truth!" This is the true ἀναγκάζειν of evangelical preaching, as it admits not of being applied in the case of those depicted in vers. 18–20. For the rest, that *on the whole and in mass* there is assumed here in the case of the Gentiles such a compelling of the predisposed mind, followed by such a believing and acceptance of the call, is in strict harmony (exceptions on both sides being allowed for) with the record of the first transitional history of the Gospel: hence the language of Acts xxviii. 28; Rom. ix. 30, and other passages. It is of the call which went forth *at the hour* of the supper that the parable primarily speaks—and from that time it goes forth more and more mightily (vi semper majore pensans *moram*), with progressively greater vehemence; for the ἤδη ἕτοιμα gives a fervent impulse to the bounty of the Lord, and makes him long that His house may be filled. Hence, in ver. 21, ἔξελθε ταχέως, which in the similitude would simply mean—before the feast has grown cold, so that this richly spread table of grace may not be prepared in vain!

[1] Hence the current "nöthigen," in the sense of einladen, which remarkably elucidates the idea.

Ver. 24. It has been strangely insisted upon that this concluding word must belong to the parable; but it obviously does not harmonise with it, and is added to it by our Lord in His own name, as He often closes His similitudes by passing over into their open interpretation. How could such a sentence be appropriately uttered by the master of the house, and reconciled with all that had preceded? It is said that in the ὑμῖν the one servant is addressed as the representative of many; but the connection between vers. 23 and 24 renders such a change in the form of address intolerable, not to say that the simple cast of the whole is grievously hurt by this sudden substitution of many before unmentioned servants. To avoid this harshness, some (as Bengel) have supposed that the master is addressing the already introduced poor of ver. 21. But we cannot discern what point or force such a saying of the entertainer would have just at this moment, whether spoken to the servant or to the guests; it would introduce at the close of all something which, to our feeling, would be slightly discordant. What does it concern the servant just now, when he is sent forth to herald a new and more urgent invitation, that those first invited will not taste of the feast? Such an assurance is not only at this point discordant, but it is altogether unnecessary, for the servant knew that doubtless already, since he had come back after an unaccomplished errand, and was commanded to go and invite others in the stead of those who refused—he certainly needed not any solemn λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν. And as it respects the poor who have come in, are they to be lifted up, as it were, and have their joy increased by a side-glance at those who had lost what they were to enjoy? How inharmonious a close would this be, of a parable constructed with such tender graciousness throughout! On the other hand, when it is placed in the lips of the true *Lord*, and regarded as His intimation of the *significance* of His parable, it assumes all its appropriate impressiveness and power. First comes *His* ordinary λέγω γάρ with its well-known emphasis, and then by the ὑμῖν the application of the lesson, hitherto addressed to one, is extended to all the guests at that feast of the Pharisees.[1] Further,

[1] The γάρ by no means requires us to assume this to be a continuation of the words of the κύριος; it rather joins on to the former καὶ εἶπεν, and

the majestic turn given to the words at once reveals His meaning —*My* supper, to which I not only invite you, but which I as the Son, with the Father, have Myself prepared for you! Similarly, the recurrence in the γεύσεται, to the confident expression of ver. 15, has its significance, as giving a decisive answer to the false confidence of that apostrophe! Assuredly ye are all *called;* if not the only such, yet the first and most preeminent; ye are as truly called to eat bread in the kingdom of God as to eat bread to-day at this table—but ye are *only* invited, and ye are invited *in vain*, for ye *come* not! Verily I say *unto you* in this parable, and if ye will not understand that, I say unto you over and above this parable, that others, hitherto not called, shall enter instead of you and taste of God's supper and Mine. The transition from the ὑμῖν to the third person, the ἐκείνων of the parable, is thought to be inconsistent with this view (Olshausen regards it as decisive against it), but we cannot help thinking that this gives a still keener edge and delicacy of precision to the Lord's words, which thus with a kind of irony half openly and half covertly address the present company. I say *unto you* (who were intended in them) that none of *those* who were bidden in this narrative (ye know now full well that they are yourselves) shall sit at My table in heaven. Thus the ἐκείνων is, first, a conclusive reference to the main figure of the parable as exhibiting themselves; with an additional undertone (not unfrequent in His word) of depreciation and turning away on His part; and thus forming a somewhat ironical contrast with the dignified ἀνδρῶν. For these scorners, however much they may assume to be genuine *men* in rank, consideration, understanding and consistent behaviour, are alas men also in excusing themselves and turning away; although they pride themselves, in their contempt of the poor within and without, in that first invitation which they nevertheless reject.

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means to say—So will God hereafter rather call in the Gentiles to fill His house, than pursue you who scorn it, with useless grace. The parable is ended, and it all comes to this—*for* ye are, by your own full determination, those who remain without!

Vers. 26, 27. Although the *συνεπορεύοντο* of the Evangelist points to the circumstance that he is relating occurrences which took place in the great final journey of our Lord, and, consequently, ver. 25 may be regarded as the formula of a new commencement; yet the subject of the following discourse shows, as we have already said, that there is an immediate connection between it and the preceding, and therefore this *πορεύεσθαι* of Jesus must at least be assumed to have followed immediately on the breaking up of the feast.[1] *I say unto you*—the great requisite is, *to come*, and eat of *My* supper! This we have just heard, and now the Lord proceeds almost as if continuing the same discourse—If any man cometh *to Me*, and will be My disciple! The true acceptance of the invitation at the time of supper, is to come *to Him*, to receive what He saith, to yield to His requirements, and follow His teaching. Is this a mere "loose coincidence;" the unity of the whole being fortuitous, or the mere result of the Evangelist's art? We think that these discourses were thus uttered by our Lord in immediate sequence; just as we often find, and shall especially in chs. xv. and xvi., that the Lord continues for a considerable space to dilate upon the same train of thoughts, until they are brought to their full conclusion: and may not this be regarded as no slight argument of the historical certainty and authenticity of the evangelical records?[2]—The essential meaning of these two utterances, so often repeated in various forms, we have developed upon Matt. x. 37, 38. This was His hard saying, concerning which it might have been said by many—"He capriciously repels, instead of attracting, the peo-

[1] Schleiermacher thinks it necessary to the style of the Evangelist, that in that case the end of the meal should be expressly mentioned.—In any case the real connection of the subject would fall into the scheme of St Luke's plan; we cannot but think it more probable, however, that the Lord Himself continued the ideas on which He had been dwelling.

[2] To what was prefatorily said upon this entire section, vers. 8–35, we may add the remarks of Braune, which almost exactly hit the point: "The Lord saw now in the people a vague and indistinct *inclination* towards Himself, as in the Pharisee He had seen a vague and indistinct *aversion*," only that these words scarcely describe the inclination and aversion in both cases so rash and unthinking, and in which all *humbleness* was wanting.

ple!" But in what sense the keen and rigorous expression of "hating,"[1] *here* only (besides Jno. xii. 25) used, is to be understood, and how it is *not* to be understood, every unbiassed reader may apprehend at once:—for to hate parents, wife, and children is in itself (as Grot. says), an impium, an ungodly thing; and to hate one's self an ἀδύνατον, Eph. v. 29. In this place let the significant ἔτι δὲ καί have its significant prominence, the meaning of which Rieger so excellently brings out: "Every thing without us derives its power of harm from the love of our own life; for all external objects blow upon this latent spark, and derive their agreeableness and fascination from their pretensions to sustain our own life and happiness." Consequently, he who hates and forsakes all things else, without hating and renouncing his own life in them, hates and renounces them all in vain. Thus much at the outset, at least as the ground and foundation of a sincere intention, belongs to the first coming, and to the first conditions of discipleship: in the subsequent following of the Lord, the cross laid upon him by God, becomes more and more understood by the disciple.

Vers. 28–30. This figure will naturally carry us back to Matt. vii. 24–27,[2] but we must not confound the distinctive reference of the two. There, the laying of a firm *foundation* is made prominent as the great essential, here the *prosecution of the building* is spoken of, which has its own peculiar difficulties. It might appear there, that the sure foundation would secure everything, and that all the rest depended upon that; but now the Lord continues the figures and adds its complement to what was before a general and introductory saying: He tells us that any man, *even after having laid the foundation*, may nevertheless be put to confusion. Let no one fail to note this, who would rightly understand the whole! What, then, is in this case the *building?*

[1] Lange thinks it "well worthy of observation that these rigorous words in their most rigorous expression occur just in the gospel of the Christian humanity"—and asks, "was it the Evangelist Luke who was bound to the Hebraism *hate?*"

[2] This parallel is simple and obvious enough; and there is no necessity for Sepp's subtle reference to the unfortunate building of Pilate (or the tower of Siloam!) any more than for the allusion found in the next parable to the unfortunate campaign of Herod against Aretas. Most inappropriate is all such learned trifling.

Not so much the first coming to the Lord as such (which is rather presupposed in the θέλειν οἰκοδομῆσαι), but the *following* of Christ in His full *discipleship*, the μαθητὴς εἶναι with all that pertains to that expression. Nitzsch, in a sermon on this text,[1] says, "It is easier to throw life away, than to lead it christianly." The great end is not to be gained with swift dispatch, but we must build, and continue to build, till the ἐκτελέσαι is attained; the perfection of discipleship is, again to quote Nitzsch, "the great design, and the great prospect, which we all have ever *before* us." The expression πύργος signifies any high building, but it seems to be selected with some slight allusion to that old, but ever renewed, history of *Babel;* for the children of God must not build as those children of men did; their building is not to remain unachieved, it must finally in a right sense reach unto and reach into heaven. But all half-Christianity becomes a Babel in the end.[2] The *sitting down first*, and considering well from the very beginning all that is involved in the continuing and finishing, is to commence with deep thoughtfulness, not rashly and superficially, in contrast with that unconsidering and thoughtless running after Him, which was witnessed at this time, and which the Lord intends to humble and repel. The bare, precipitate resolution is very far from accomplishing all that is necessary at the outset; we cannot thus build from above downwards, as if we were already in heaven, as children begin to paint their houses from the roof. Nor do the walls, staircases, and doors complete the perfect dwelling-house; the ἐκτελεῖν embraces much, even down to the last and smallest nail and bolt which pertains πρὸς ἀπαρτισμόν, that is, to the garnishing and furnishing (not to say the decoration) of the house. How many builders of houses deceive themselves still in this counting of the cost, as well in the actual fact as in that which it here illustrates! A

[1] Whose sermons have so much profound exegetical value, that we cannot but lament his not writing direct exposition!

[2] The disciple, however, must *build*, fundamentally and loftily build; Alford's view, that the man's wishing to build the tower is itself a vain idea, is assuredly incorrect; not a syllable in the parable warrants that thought, it is opposed to the essential meaning of the two similitudes in their connection (building and warfare), and is not in harmony with the phraseology of our Lord and Scripture generally.

building left unfinished provokes men to mockery, as does every abortive effort of will without power, betraying a lack of prudence in planning for the accomplishment of its plans; and it is on this, alas universal, fact that the Lord bases His parable, but only that He may extend and vary its application. In some human undertakings, indeed, intelligent men would regard it as honourable in a man to desist from a project rather than to persist in its accomplishment through all kinds of unjustifiable means; there are great ruins in our land which need not fear mockery. But in the building of God's discipleship, the completion may be righteously demanded and expected of all who have begun; in this case the not continuing brings its own fitting disgrace in the sight of God and man. It is only the complete and decided Christian who enforces the respect of the world; but the world is quick to indemnify itself upon those who are only half-Christians, and who visibly give up the object which they profess to aim at: the savourless salt is trodden under their feet. Indeed, it is a different case if they only see and are constrained to admit, that a man, though he has not finished his building, is industrious and unwearied in his efforts, and that however slowly he proceeds, he is likely with such zeal and earnestness to accomplish his enterprise at last. But when they actually see the building at a stand, or falling down, after it had been begun (indeed, if they sometimes only think they see it), the man's name, "οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος," becomes a reproach and a proverb. Thus the world readily anticipates and takes upon itself the judgment upon a disgraceful incompleteness in religion; that condemnation of a beginning without finishing, which belongs only to God, but which is foreshadowed and foreannounced in the true though maliciously meant condemnation passed by sinful men. Or if it should come to pass (though the rule here takes no account of such an unusual exception) that under some circumstances the children of the world should *praise* me for having become rational again, and having given up the foolish rigour of piety —then will the devil in his time take their place, and finish the mockery in his own way.

When it thus happens to one who has actually laid the foundation, we may strictly speaking say (and this reconciles our parable with Matt. vii. 24, comp. Matt. xiii. 20, 21) that the

foundation itself was wanting, that is, that a well-considered decided beginning was not made in order to a thorough completion; for the hasty laying of a foundation without due counting of the cost is itself, as it were, a foundation *without* foundation. This is in the meaning of our Lord, since the subsequent incompetence springs from an original lack, from a love of the world and of his own life, which the builder has not thoroughly renounced but retained. Therefore sit down *before* and reckon aright, *whether thou hast sufficient!* But how then? Are we to finish this building from the resources of our own providing? Far be that from us, we cannot even begin it from them. *We have not* wherewith, we are *not* to build with our own:—to know *this*, to cast away all our own materials as useless, and to venture in perfect self-consecration upon the ground of grace, is the essential requirement, as ver. 26 has told us.[1] There is consequently a concealed irony in the εἰ ἔχει, which points forcibly to our own poverty; and the true counting of the cost which the Lord requires, is to set out with the determination to renounce ourselves and build upon the fast foundation of grace. Lest the first parable should be misunderstood, and this great truth not be perceived in it, a second now follows, which more plainly brings out this essential relation of the case.

Vers. 31, 32. Dost thou, that is, think thou hadst and still hast sufficient, then does the Lord, in the process of discipleship, apply to thee His rigid tests, and proves to thee that He is too mighty for thee; He will fight against thee with His sanctifying power and discipline, so that thine impotence as opposed to Him, shall become manifest to thyself;—well for thee if, after that, thou seekest peace with Him, in order to a new and genuine beginning. The *building*, before, looked rather back to the commencement (ἤρξατο οἰκοδομεῖν!); but now the *warfare* exhibits, properly speaking, the finishing unto victory, the winning and maintaining our great object. This similitude is often entirely misunderstood by those who, despite the connection directly established between ver. 33 and ver. 32 by the οὕτως, interpret the *desiring conditions of peace* of a disgraceful discontinuance of the war and

[1] Olshausen refers to Augustin, Conf. viii. 6, speaking of two disciples—Et ambo jam *tui* ædificabant turrim sumtu idonea, relinquendi omnia sua et sequendi te.

relapse into the *world*, as if it meant:—If he has not power, he should not have undertaken the war any more than the building, or should now make peace again. Whatever analogy may seem to lead to this mischievous exposition, it is altogether opposed to the *true* analogy of both these parables; for the Lord, who had just before given up the leaving off midway to its appropriate scorn, could not with such a tone as this in any sense counsel such discontinuance of the war; and τὰ πρὸς εἰρήνην clearly corresponds to τὰ πρὸς ἀπαρτισμόν, as does εἰ δύνατός ἐστιν to εἰ ἔχει, this being the object which it should be in both cases a man's wisdom to secure.[1] We would rather say that the second parable continues and expounds the former in *another* aspect of the matter; bringing out, to speak more correctly, the *inner* meaning of the previous ἔχειν, inasmuch as it can only come from the sense of want, and consequent seeking of grace, from the sense of powerlessness and consequent seeking for peace. *War*, as the Lord here intends it, can only be where there is already a beginning of discipleship:—man naturally is at peace with the world and its prince, and does not seek conditions of peace with God! Consequently, that other king, with whom this conflict has to do, can by no means be the prince of this world or the devil;[2] but no other than God, the disciple's Lord, opposing Himself as an *apparent* enemy to His children, because His sacred and sanctifying power and discipline must ever be in conflict with all their independent life and will, until it be extinguished. We must understand it in the sense of such passages as Job ix. 19, 32, 33, xv. 24; comp. Judith xvi. 16. God comes with twenty thousand against our ten thousand, that is, with always twice our power, be we strong and well armed as we may.[3] *Our* ten thousand have been already received and acquired in our previous discipleship; it is the strength which

[1] Alford here agrees with me, and speaks of the ordinary misinterpretation—which destroys all the sense.

[2] Braune, alas, still holds to this; and Lange, too, who interprets it of the "prince of darkness."

[3] There is probably a subtle significance in the change of ἐν and μετά. Man is, even in authority, as it were only one person among (בְּיִחוּד) his fellows; but God comes in kingly majesty with His ministering hosts. Or better, with Alford:—"Can I, with (*ἐν with all that I have*, all my instruments of

we have, and which seems so adequate, and which we are tempted to count our own, and use against the further disciplinary power of God. This is a foolish and melancholy declension into the old, not yet wholly uprooted error, which assumes that we are, or have, or can do, anything of ourselves in the presence of Him to whom all power belongs—and it is ironically exhibited in the relation between man and God being set forth as the going out of one *king* against *another* king! We must begin and achieve the *building*, but never as in *conflict* with Him, who alone has, and imparts the power and resources requisite. In this matter all proceeds from beginning to end only in *peace*, in peace *sued for*. Not that men deliberately and consciously purpose to fight against God, any more than they duly considered, in the former case, that they could not finish the building; they simply value themselves upon the power they have as their own, even while piously attributing it to the "rich grace of God." It is not merely *before* the commencement of conversion and the first suing for peace, that proud man thus exalts himself, rashly declaring, when God opposes him with His law—that he will keep it with all his heart, practise all virtues and avoid all vices; when God threatens him with temptation—that he will soon pass through it, resolute not to fall; when God speaks of solemn tests and Christ speaks of His cross—that he is ready, with fixed decision, to bear and encounter all! But here the Lord refers to that worse folly—against which the *first* supplication for peace should insure the disciple for ever—viz., that of those who, when converted, afterwards turn the grace which they have received and their little kingly power against the King of kings, instead of continuing for ever to seek in yet more perfect self-renunciation and holiness fresh accessions of grace. Be thou ever so well equipped with excellencies—He will make them into thy sins; be thou ever so full of good resolves—His tests will break them; regard thyself as ever so well furnished and armed to appear and stand before Him at His coming—He will at last, in death and judgment, remain mightier than thou.

war) my ten thousand, stand the charge of Him who cometh against me with (μετά, being *only as many as He pleases to bring with Him* for the purpose—see Ps. lxviii. 17, E. V.) twenty thousand?"

To the previous *disgrace* of the building unaccomplished should now, properly speaking, correspond the disgrace of going forth to the battle in impotence and being overcome; this aspect of the case is, however, pretermitted now as being sufficiently understood from the preceding. On the other hand, nothing is said in ver. 32 (let it be well noted!) of scorn or shame, since to pray for peace in the presence of the more mighty one involves no disgrace, is rather the most praiseworthy prudence that man can exhibit. To send an ambassage, is voluntarily and *humbly* to take up the cross with which the Lord opposes us, and to *bear* it in self-sacrificing devotion before our essential and true crucifixion. He who is refractory against the cross, as well as he who recoils before it (for the fleeing before the other king is also in vain), appears here a *θεομάχος*; he who takes up the cross *submits*. Thus the two similitudes are, when accurately regarded, parallel with the two utterances of vers. 26, 27: to *hate* the world and our own life, is essential to the first *coming*, else the cost has not been justly counted; the *cross* of discipline, test and trial in order to confirmation of faith, comes against *those who are following* Christ, and to sue for peace is ever the only strength in this warfare. The latter applies the test to ascertain whether the former has been genuinely and fundamentally done. Thus from beginning to end the cost of being a Christian is great; and yet it is not too great for such as are poor and humble in spirit. *Peace with God* ever renewed, graciously assured and confirmed by the seeming opposition of His grace, confirmed in obedient submission to His guidance, reception of His sanctifying influence, enjoyment of all His infused gifts and energising power—this is finally, and in the highest sense, the consummation of discipleship under the cross.

Ver. 33. By this emphatic reiteration the Lord would ask—Have ye truly understood all these things? The *οὕτως*, which must not be superficially passed over, gives the express and formal interpretation, not only of the suing for peace in the second, but also of the counting of the cost in the first, similitude; for the renunciation of all this is ours, is the common foundation and central idea of both; the *ὑπάρχοντα* are not only the cost of the building, but the strength also for the

war.[1] Thus it is a *self-renunciation*, the sincere and humble acknowledgment of our abiding poverty and helplessness; such as in relation to God truth and right alike demand from us all through! He who submits to be brought to this condition by the salt of truth, and the discipline of God in the teaching and guidance of Christ, has thereby himself become salt, for the riches of God's grace and the power of His Spirit then enter into the needy and the empty souls.

Vers. 34, 35. This saying concerning salt the Lord here utters for the third time; let the exposition, therefore, be consulted upon Matt. v. 13 and Mark ix. 50, where it will be seen how pointedly the latter passage especially coincides with the connection of our present place. There it was made prominent at the close, how the salt of humility and self-denial is bound up with the true *peace one with another;* here it is similarly represented, after ver. 32, as bound up with the prayed for and experienced *peace with God.* There are who would here interpret the ἐν τίνι ἀρτυθήσεται—wherewith, then, will the food be seasoned? or again—in quo cibo eo (scil. sale) utetur, *in what* shall it be used as seasoning? But both these interpretations are incorrect, and the saying is assuredly the same in all three passages, as the ἐν τίνι ἁλισθήσεται of Matt. v. is decisively expounded by the ἐν τίνι αὐτὸ ἀρτύσετε of Mark ix. It is the savourless salt itself which is spoken of here down to the final αὐτό: εἰς γήν also is not the same with εἰς κοπρίαν, for the οὔτε forbids that; it is good neither as laid upon *ground* (or arable land), nor as mixed with *manure*[2]—in brief εἰς οὐδὲν ἰσχύει ἔτι, εἰ μὴ βληθῆναι ἔξω, it has no longer any virtue or goodness for anything. Thus, finally, the disciple who has utterly apostatised

[1] There are passages which we cannot hear and read with too keen inquisition into their words. Τὰ πρὸς ἀπαρτισμόν we *have* not, but the great builder, who Himself edifies us, affords them to us; τὰ πρὸς εἰρήνην, He does indeed assure to us who ask them, but in this case *our* ἐρωτᾶν is made more prominent as the condition, and hence τὰ πρὸς εἰρήνην itself designates our prayer.

[2] Men do not sow on salt (Ps. cvii. 34), nor is salt used as manure, though many strangely so interpret here. (See Deut. xxix. 23; Jud. ix. 45; Ps. cvii. 34; Jer. xvii. 6; Zeph. ii. 9.) If the noble and excellent substance is useless for its own proper function, it is not to be used εἰς ἄλλο γένος.

from his calling and the beginning of his discipleship is not to be restored; he is abandoned already to the scorn and contempt of men.

HIS RECEIVING SINNERS VINDICATED FROM THE CENSURE OF THE SELF-RIGHTEOUS. THE SINNER'S REPENTANCE OR PUNISHMENT, IN A SERIES OF PARABLES.

(Chap. xv. 4–xvi. 31.)

We would scarcely affirm, with Ebrard, that the parables of chap. xv. are closely connected with the subject of the previous chapter, as exhibiting in its utmost clearness and force that spiritual poverty and sense of helplessness which Christ requires in those who come to Him, and to which alone He assures acceptance; though we are free to admit that in St Luke's arrangement the doctrine of Jesus in chap. xiv. is a certain preparation for that of chap. xv. (Ebrard, after joining these two chapters somewhat too closely, makes the connection between chaps. xv. and xvi. much less strict than it really is.) Nor can we accept Olshausen's view of the *contrast* between the exhibition of compassionate love as now depicted, and the strict severity of what had preceded; thus making the point of junction between these discourses the contrast between our Lord's rejection of some and acceptance of others. For although the Evangelist seems in chap. xv. to make a certain reference to chap. xiv. 25, giving prominence in his present description of the crowd around our Lord's person to the better, humbler element in it, yet the words of ch. xv. 1 themselves have all the appearance of a new commencement generally. In particular, the πάντες (omitted by the Vulg.) which Luther has groundlessly translated by *allerlei* (comp. Matt. ix. 10, πολλοί), must not be understood of all the publicans and sinners of this immediate place; it manifestly enlarges the scene to embrace the whole sphere of our Saviour's general teaching. Where and when this now specifically took place, does not affect the question at all; it is the constant and ever-recurring scene, the drawing near of sinners, and the mur-

muring of the "righteous"—as it is exhibited in Matt. ix. 10, 11, Luke vii. 39, and once more, in this place. Grotius rightly discerns this tone of generality in the form of expression ἦσαν ἐγγίζοντες, and compares chap. iv. 31. And as the concise εἶπε δέ of ver. 11 can only indicate an immediate sequence of discourse (according to St Luke's habit of interpolating such remarks to quicken attention); so must the keen discernment of a profound exposition come to the conclusion that the whole of the sixteenth chapter (which closely binds together its own two halves in vers. 14, 15, and hangs ver. 19 on the sentences, vers. 15–18, spoken in connection with ver. 14) belongs to the series of connected discourses begun with chap. xv. 1.[1] Consequently, chap. xvi. 1 does not introduce a general formula (though the expression might seem to imply as much), but the Lord's address to the *disciples* corresponds to that addressed to the Pharisees, chap. xv. 3; just as we have once and again seen in chap. xii. 1, 15, 22, 54. Even Schleiermacher found chap. xvi. intelligible only in connection with chap. xv.; and it is very generally allowed, because so obvious, that the disciples referred to in chap. xvi. 1 are those who had just come to Jesus, the publicans who stood at the threshold of discipleship. But it is equally plain that the Pharisees in chap. xvi. 14 are continuing the mockery of chap. xv. 2.

This is the profoundly significant manner of the Evangelists generally, and of St Luke in particular, by formulæ apparently indefinite to carry on the most precise and definite narrative, thus leaving something for our intelligent investigation to find out, and accustoming us to understand the same words in different senses in different connections. When we read with the necessary discrimination, keeping this fact in mind, we shall be able to lay a sure foundation for the right understanding of the two parables concerning the unjust judge and the rich man, in their harmony and connection; and disentangle the former especially from the confusion in which expositors have involved it.

And what a mighty and gracious testimony is that which, in

[1] Not, indeed, all spoken in one breath, as we may naturally suppose; yet, in close sequence, as a series of connected thoughts for the same hearers.

ver. 2, is extorted from the lips of His enemies! Yea, these stony-hearted men are constrained involuntarily to greet the Saviour of sinners with such a Hosanna, and thus unconsciously to fulfil their duty in directing poor sinners, by themselves rejected, to the true source of their salvation.

This is not, indeed, their conscious purpose; their own perversion of mind and wickedness of will in this remarkable utterance is great and manifold. "*The sinners!*" (or, as without the article, Such *sinners* as these!) They altogether forget the *repentance* of these sinners, as coming between their *hearing* and His *receiving;* hence it is forcibly set before them in vers. 7 and 10, and affectingly depicted in vers. 17–20. Their infatuated charge—"*He receiveth them!*"—condemns in Him the first intercourse with such sinners, His having anything to do with them at all; leaving out of sight the fact that such sinners might, and would, be brought to repentance. St Luke records only, ver. 1, that *they* drew near unto Him that *they* might hear Him; why, then, did not these malignants confine their rebukes to that alone, even as in chap. xiii. 14 the ruler of the synagogue had condemned the θεραπεύεσθαι of the people? Should He not, then, heal them and teach them; should He not let them draw near and hear? *Hearing* is, as preachers to the people should have known, the only true way to the beginning of repentance and faith, and the ceasing to be a sinner. These people came not, as the Evangelist testifies, to see signs, to eat bread, to be delivered from their sicknesses, but only to *hear*, comp. chap. v. 1. It was the Lord's deep earnestness, that truth of His (as chap. xiv.) so rigorously decided and requiring such rigorous decision, which ever drew to Him the souls deeply conscious of need, while it repelled only the idle concourse of the crowd. "If hearts are to be attracted, they must mark something genuine to suit their case. No man tempted and tried would go to a free liver, but to those whose reputation is that of being strict. For from such they hope honourable and just dealing, and more likely cure." (Berl. Bib.) The humble *hear* and *learn*, they find the seeking and accepting grace of God in the pure truth of His word as issuing from the lips of Jesus; the proud and perverted *murmur* and *condemn*, their dark understandings darken the love of God where it would shine most brightly.

These did not, indeed, dare to direct their words immediately against the Holy One of God; but they διεγόγγυζον, that is, they murmured among themselves, here and there, yet so that their murmuring should reach His ears—though He would otherwise have known and marked it well.

In this saying of the Pharisees, which we must closely analyse, in order to seize the proper point from which our Lord's long answer proceeds, there are several distinct grounds of error, which we may thus exhibit. First—We are not sinners ourselves! Then,—as St Luke himself writes in ver. 1, adopting the current phraseology—only by gross and scandalous sins, *e.g.*, by such unrighteousness as the publican's, does a man become a ἁμαρτωλός. Thirdly: With this they conjoin the uncharitable and irrational condemnation of whole classes of men as such,—All publicans are such sinners—while the Evangelist, on the other hand, designedly places between them a note of distinction in his καί. Finally: By such premises—adding to this false major an equally false minor—they arrive at the unscrupulous and malignant conclusion that even He, the holy Prophet Himself, must be a sinner too! "Tell me with whom thou consortest, and I will tell thee what thou art!" This ambiguous commonplace they apply to Him as they would to any other common man—who might have no special vocation to trouble himself about those who need instruction and amendment. And even in such a case their meaning is perverse, for *every* pious man has in reality and in the end both the obligation entailed upon him, and the ability to discharge it in some sense; the rule of Ps. i. 1, as applicable to ourselves, only requires us to avoid the fellowship of sinners so far as it might be a temptation and a snare; else must we in love and in pity strive to exert a wholesome influence upon them. And is the Lord Jesus alone to be excluded from this? They mark him out by their very emphatic οὗτος, and incautiously betray in this little word the true grounds of their malignant conclusion, which they would not have arrived at in the case of any other man, and which wilfully forgets all that their own eyes must have seen in His conduct and character. "*This man*, who is contrary to us now, and is everywhere in our way (ch. xxiii. 18), who receiveth not, and doth not acknowledge *us*, who doth alienate the people's hearts from our chairs of in-

struction, and so forth. This man, whose claims we also will not admit, and whom we will not hear, turns on that account to the rabble;—it is plain, therefore, that we are quite justified in our action concerning Him, for He *eateth* wherever He can eat, without making any inquiry about the company (Matt. xi. 19; Lu. vii. 34)." They omit now any reference to the *drinking*, because fellowship with the table of the unclean was sufficiently defined and characterised without it, in their accustomed way of speaking—see Acts xi. 3. And all this comes to their minds and their lips, because they know nothing by their own experience of the work of God in calling sinners, and have no illustration in their own hearts of the coming to repentance of those who are called. If they had, they would have recognised the great foundation of all Divine revelation from the forfeiture of paradise downwards,—that "*God* receiveth sinners!" and their allegation against the hated οὗτος (like Matt. ix. 3, somewhat more intelligently than here)—would have condemned only His presumption in doing what was solely the work of God. But then arose the question—Is it solely and immediately the work of God? Were they not expressly appointed to seek and invite sinners to come to God for acceptance? Ah, if they had known themselves and the heart of God, the grace which preceded and pervaded even the law in the Old Testament, they would have known that—the holier a man was, and the more like God, the more gracious and condescending must he be towards sinners! If they had understood the prophecies concerning the Messiah, they would have recognised Jesus by this distinctive token of His Messiahship, and would have hailed Him with another οὗτος —Yea, *this man* is He! See Isa. xlii. 3, l. 4, etc.

Thus the fundamental idea from which our Lord's entire and ample answer—seizing and uprooting their wilful error in its essential principle—proceeds, is no other than this: "What is a *sinner?* How stands it, how does it go, with him in his sin, and in his *repentance* in order to God's acceptance of him? Are ye then altogether ignorant as to this? Ye are yourselves truly sinners like these—now these suffer themselves to be sought and found—but is it otherwise with you? Then woe unto you in your impenitence!" Thus the reply given to them is, in its full completeness, to be exhibited under two aspects. On the one

hand, *penitent* sinners are *justified* in their approach; they are shown to be literally *received*, even as their objection ran; they are then further instructed for their after discipline. But, on the other hand, it *warns* sinners who are *impenitent* in their murmuring pride; but in such a manner as to show them that the love, which arrays before them the *punishment* threatened, *does yet seek them* still, if peradventure they may accept instruction and escape from condemnation. This gives us the substance of the whole, down to the final parable concerning the rich man in torment, and further Abraham's lesson of *believing!* The central theme is this—*The sinner's repentance or doom*, by which he is either gained and saved, or left and lost; so depicted as to show that the *seeking love of God* persists despite the stiffnecked opposition of the sinner, and *still invites* even after the first outbreak of punishment. First, the sinner's repentance! And here it is exhibited to the self-righteous Pharisees, blindly rushing to their own doom—in order to the justification of His own conduct, and if possible to awaken shame in their own hearts—that the grace of the Three-One God *seeks* to retrieve lost sinners, *receives* back again the penitent, *bears with* the perverse, and thereby *still seeks them* likewise. These are the *three* parables of ch. xv. Then, as the transitional middle-term between the great alternative before presented—the sinner's *prudent wisdom in avoiding punishment!* There we find it declared—in the hearing of the Pharisees—to the new disciples, and especially to those who had been publicans, for their encouragement as well as for their necessary warning, that the superabundant grace of God not only *permits* to the sinner, absolved in the reckoning with Him, the use of the worldly goods which had been the mammon of unrighteousness for all purposes of brotherly kindness, but absolutely requires it; and that *fidelity* in the dispensation of this love will be rewarded, while the opposite *unfaithfulness* will only involve and draw after it a *new punishment*. This we have in ch. xvi. 1–13, a parable of contrast, derived from the prudence of the children of this world, and which therefore the Lord, to obviate all possible misunderstanding, has Himself expressly interpreted.[1]

[1] And yet how many have failed to perceive even this, and still more its true connection with what precedes, and with what follows, as the middle

Finally, the sinner's *punishment*, which falls upon him in the kingdom of the dead when he has persisted in scorning the love of God, which down to the last sought his soul; after he has thereby hardened his heart into unbelief of the extant word of God, and into all unmercifulness against his neighbour. Thus it is once more exhibited to the Pharisees, for their conviction and warning,—that *presumptuous practical unbelief* in God's revelation brings upon self-righteous and hypocritical sinners these *torments*, which may be the only remaining way—though a severe one—still, if it were possible, *to win them*. This is the last of these parables, placed, as we may hope, in its own clear light; and the express and instructive *preparatory* address (vers. 15–18), to those who were aimed at, is a kind of index to the true interpretation, just as the previous parable received its explanation at its conclusion, vers. 10–13.

THE SEEKING OF THE LOST, THE JOY OVER THE FOUND: THE LOST SHEEP, AND THE WOMAN'S PIECE OF SILVER.

(Luke xv. 4–10, [Matt. xviii. 12, 13].)

Before we enter more minutely into the exposition of the two first parallel parables, in their significant juxtaposition, we must apprehend the full meaning of the *Trilogy* of the lost and the found again. But first of all we must notice the dichotomy which pervades the whole (and which St Luke makes evident in ver. 11):—the *seeking* of the lost comes forward in the two former parables which have a more directly figurative character, though expressly interpreted for us; the *acceptance* of the penitent, whose coming has been prompted indeed by the seeking,

point between them. It is by no means the mere "transition from the dogmatic to the moral" (as Ebrard says, and Olshausen too, describing them as "parables concerning the benevolent love of man"), as if the point of connection was the condemnation in a final parable of "a hard-hearted indifference to our neighbour." The deeper fundamental idea is repentance unto new life and new love in faith, in order to escaping from eternal misery and need.

and in conjunction with this the *longsuffering forbearance* towards the stiffnecked (who is still *sought* by that forbearance) appear together in the third parable, which is followed by no interpretation, since parable and interpretation almost entirely coincide.[1] To the penitent "publican and sinner" is opposed the self-righteous Pharisee as a *worse sinner* than he—making it in the end very plain who the "ninety and nine just persons" are.

But now for the *threefold* series, and the distinction, also, between the first and the second. Bengel's words, which so profoundly penetrate the meaning of the whole, say all that is necessary; we have only to develop and exhibit on all sides his concise hints. "Ovis, drachma, filius perditus: peccator stupidus, sui plane nescius, sciens et voluntarius." We might take it for granted, in our Lord's discourses, that the two former parables, with all their analogy, are not intended to teach simply the same thing; but that they bear somewhat the same relation to each other as the grain of mustard seed and the leaven, the hid treasure and the pearls, in Matt. xiii. Olshausen, as if he had not on this occasion consulted Bengel, sees the truth afar off, but speaks doubtfully—"The second parable is *obscure*. For I cannot persuade myself that it contributes no new feature to the general picture presented by the three parables; and that consequently the contrast between γυνή and ἄνθρωπος, between δέκα and ἑκατόν is merely accidental. Yet I have nothing positive to say as to the true explanation, and therefore leave it to those who are more keen-sighted." He then makes a timid reference to the comparison of the kneading woman, Matt. xiii. 33 (the virgins, chap. xxv. 1, are not in point), on which we also took occasion to refer to the present passage. We shall see how well-grounded is the analogy of interpretation between the woman there and the woman here; and how securely we may rely upon Bengel's explanation of the entire Trilogy, as we shall develop it, with the consequent distinctive significance of its middle

[1] In the two former parables the prominent personality is the seeking love of Him who had lost, in the third the sinner himself, as submitting to be found and repenting. Thus it is speaking too indefinitely, to dispatch the two former parables as the mere introduction to the affecting history of the prodigal son."

member. Can we suppose that the first and the third would have so distinctive a reference, but the second be without it? Can we regard the Lord as almost repeating, unnecessarily, the very same thing? Be it far from us to think so!

The distinction in *that which is lost* is so far indicated by Bengel, as to show that such a distinction exists. Consequently we may be assured that there is also a corresponding distinction in the *seeker* of the several instances. But the person seeking must be God in Christ, that which is lost must be man in his condition as a sinner. In seeking ourselves the contrasts between the lost and the seeker we must first mark the *threefold* personality of the latter, the reference of which to the Trinity Bengel has also perceived. The *woman* cannot be primarily and absolutely the church, as in Matt. xiii. For this is itself only a recovered sheep, a piece of silver found. The Lord apprehends *the sinner* (this was our starting-point) under the threefold aspect of his sin. He first regards him as in the midst of his actual and present course of sin, from that benignant point of view under which he is viewed by the grace which is resolute not to give him up, and in which he is regarded in that inexhaustible normal passage, Isa. liii. 6;—then he appears as a foolish and wandering sheep, straying shepherdless in the ways of perdition, *peccator stupidus*. The Lord afterwards descends and ascends to the *result* and the *first principle* of such a condition. The sheep continuing to stray is regarded in the one case as a treasure perfectly lost; and, in the other, the beginning of his error is exhibited, as that of a child consciously and deliberately revolting against his father. The *foolish, wandering sheep* (as opposed to whom those who *know* the way might be termed just, *if* they knew it aright, and walked in it accordingly), are sought again and found by the *Son*, who is Himself the calling *word*, the wisdom, and the way:—hence we see the sheep and its *Shepherd*, whose voice the publicans and sinners even now *hear!* The *sinner lying in the dust*, who has, alas, reached the first goal of his evil way (having, however, still the stamp of God upon him, as he once belonged to God's treasured possession—glancing forward to the third!)—*sui plane nescius*, in the עָפָר of φθορά and of θάνατος (while, on the other hand, a sheep has at least some instinct of pasture, and a kind of remembrance of the shepherd's

voice)—is sought again and found by the *Spirit*, who is the *energy* of the life and light of God, the breath of life which first removes the dust, the light which dispels the darkness. (Jno. i. 4.) The Spirit is indeed presented in Scripture, from Gen. i. 1, 2, downwards, as feminine and motherly; but it is that He works, enlightens, and sweeps, by the instrumentality of the church of God upon earth. Thus there is some truth in the observation of Luther, who understands here "the Christian church;" but this *woman* is not the church in herself, but the Holy Spirit in the church, or the church as the organ of the Spirit. She is, as the bride in humanity, so the mother in God. The Spirit and the Bride say Come!—to the Lord. But the Spirit and the mother speak in invitation to every hearer of their voice—Come and join with us! Rev. xxii. 17. Finally, *whence* originated this wandering of the sinner, and this lying in the dust? He is, indeed, no sheep, nor is he a piece of money, but he is of Divine original. In the beginning of his sin, he can be regarded only as a *peccator sciens et voluntarius*, a conscious and voluntary sinner. The *apostate sinner*—such in the origin and in the permanent internal principle of his sin—is first left in his liberty by the *Father*, the *true Creator*, the eternal *will of love* (the ultimate principle in God's relation to us); then borne with by the long-suffering which foresees the misery which will drive him back; and, if he *sciens et voluntarius*, consciously and voluntarily, returns, graciously *received again*.

Thus in the first parable are properly opposed the ninety and nine so-called just persons, who ask not for the way, who hearken not to the word, who do not draw near to the Saviour or the Shepherd to hear Him:—it might be supposed because they are in the right way, but that a doubt arises on account of their very ungodly murmuring against God and the joy of all the angels. In the second parable they are preliminarily left out of the question,[1] but in the third the abhorred picture of these supposed just ones is exhibited in full by the character of the elder son.

Vers. 4–7. Thus Christ presents Himself as the good Shepherd, who seeks the lost sheep—according to His humanity

[1] "The two former parables ended in such a manner, that they could not allege that they were designed to taunt themselves; *meanwhile their indignation might somewhat abate.*" Berlenb. Bibel.

assumed to that end; and brings it home when found, with the universal sympathy of the joy of heaven—according to His Divinity glorified in the ascension. The subjoined interpretation of ver. 7 with its οὕτως concurs with the ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, and the distinctive future of ἔσται, to lead us at once to such an explanation of the whole; nor could the Pharisees and Scribes fail to discern, as the Lord proceeded and ended His words, this ulterior meaning in parables which had their starting-point in simple human relations. The figure of the Good *Shepherd*, faithfully seeking His lost sheep, which our Lord was well-pleased to recur to again and again, is taken from the centre of the Old Testament, where not only is Jehovah so exhibited in His relations to the people and to individuals, but the future manifestation of His fulness of grace in the *Messiah* is especially presented in imagery of this kind. We know how He appears there as the one Shepherd who is to be raised up, the true David, and so forth; we have already had occasion, upon Matt. xviii.,[1] to point out the allusions in Ezek. xxxiv.:—see vers. 6, 11, 12, 16, and, at the same time, vers. 7–10. Thus does the Lord say plainly to these murmurers:—This, for which you blame Me, is My great work, the work of the Messiah; it should also be yours, but ye have shamefully neglected it, and I must supply among the multitudes of the lost in Israel your lack of service, restoring what ye have ruined! Let it be observed, further, how the Lord God who Himself was to come in the person of the Messiah, speaks in Ezekiel continually of "*My* sheep;" and this will help us to feel the profound emphasis of the "*having*" and "if *he lose*" as they fall now from our Lord's lips. First of all, it seems to say—What *man* among *you* would not do the same? This is not so much —Ye are men yourselves, and will ye in your uncharitableness refuse to trouble yourselves about the lost and the wretched? But we must regard it as the common argument from a poor needy animal to a man (as in the sabbath-healings); and, more than that, as pointing to natural *self-interestedness*, influenced by which the covetous man would not *lose* even one

[1] Olshausen, however, speaks of this parable having its original place, not in Matt. xviii., but here in Lu. xv.—as if it could only have been spoken once! When will the hypothesis, which so much abhors repetitions in the Gospels, disappear from evangelical criticism?

of his hundred sheep.[1] Thus does the Lord place His own Divine, incarnate, and unparalleled action in the most condescending comparison with the most ordinary conduct of men;—and there is in that comparison a certain profound truth which must be understood, and before which human folly is repelled. But the words most assuredly penetrate much deeper than that; for, the affectionate *shepherd-feeling* of ver. 5 indicates much more than the mere care of its own property. In the centre of all lies the profound thought, that in God and Christ love is one with self-interest, and self-interest is one with love; no such contrariety existing between them as is found in the case of man. God loveth men, and all His creatures, for the sake of His own glory which should be reflected in them; but this, again, is no other than pure self-renouncing love, for He who hath not merely a hundred, but ten thousand times ten thousand sheep, and can always create others unlimitedly, nevertheless is unwilling to find one wanting, and counts that as *lost*, in itself, which He cannot feed, and bless, and save for ever. And so, in a lower degree, but with the mind of God, should the shepherds of Israel, as the servants of God, count the sheep as their own: see Jno. x. 12.

The Lord does not expressly say—"That which I now do, should *ye* have already done;" nor, on the other hand,—"What else doth *God* with regard to His people, and all mankind?" But He rather says, and more expressively—"I thus indeed act as *man*, as the *Son of Man;* and *what man* in like case (although in another sense than that in which I act) *would not do the same?*" For the rest, it is plain that the *sheep* of the Lord Jesus do not here designate, in the sense of the discourses in St John, those who are foreseen as believers and elect; although many thus perversely interpret His meaning, and hence find themselves altogether at a loss to account for the ninety and nine. It may be said (with Richter) that all Israel is primarily to be understood; we think, however, that the hundred sheep extend much further than that, and intimate—"All men are My sheep, and therefore even ye unfaithful shepherds are such."

[1] Lange pursues this thought, and emphasises it too much; for the idea of the shepherd's solicitude for the completeness of the round number of a hundred is only a subordinate feature in the parable itself; and so of the woman's scanty *ten* pieces.—Or must we refer to *Anselm's* full number?

Christ is "the Man, whose all men are!" Still occupied by His gracious intercourse with the publicans and sinners who had drawn near to hear Him, He takes the gentlest view of the apostasy of all mankind from God and from Himself; contemplating them under that gracious aspect which has also its truth. "They are indeed wretched and wandering sheep;—but ye are (as ye think) in the right way; may I not, then, *leave you?* This ye willingly consent to; then let Me seek the lost, receive those who draw near to Me, save those who hear Me and repent, though you need it not!" It could not be but that this most gracious beginning should immediately assume a tone of gentle or severe irony as it regards these perverse hearers. He does not actually leave any flock without a shepherd in the wilderness, while He goes to seek the one stray sheep (as Eliab blamed David, 1 Sam. xvii. 28);—though the parable in its limitation does not extend to that, nor does the Lord's immediate answer involve that necessity.

But now let us observe in ver. 5 the graciousness of the Shepherd, who is not indeed influenced by the common selfishness of man, but by tender love to the sheep themselves! We would not press the allusion, with Melancthon, who says:—Est suavis significatio inserta *passionis* Christi; ovem inventam ponit in humeros suos, *i.e.*, ipse onus nostrum transfert in seipsum, fit victima pro nobis; for, the passion of our Lord is rather involved already in the *going after*, till He find the objects of His love; the retrieved ones are already atoned for. But this figure of the Shepherd with his sheep upon His shoulder, which the early Christians so much delighted in portraying, does most expressively paint the tender and assiduous love which the sinner experiences on his first return by repentance. Oh that poor penitent converts found always such gentle treatment from the proud world, or even from some proud saints! The great and good Shepherd, in the fulness of His love and joy, does not hand over the poor sheep to a servant, who would hurry it home in his hireling way: no, He beareth it Himself (see Isa. xl. 11), reminding us of the leading or *bringing in* of chap. xiv. 21, which falls immeasurably short, and is assigned to the servant. No chastisement for the running away, no driving or whipping back—the poor sheep is weary and *languishing* enough by reason of its wanderings (Matt.

.x. 36); the great object is solicitously to warn and to shelter it against new dangers—"that I may not again lose thee, My beloved and peculiar treasure, which it rejoices Me to have found again!

The *coming home* of the Shepherd precisely corresponds to His *going forth*, πορεύεσθαι. It was not, indeed, literally said *in the parable* that there was such a going forth from home (the parallel is καταλείπειν); but it was actually intended, nevertheless, to indicate the whole human life of our Lord with its great aim, and is therefore to be interpreted by Matt. xviii. 11, comp. Lu. xix. 10, where the Son of Man is said to have *come* to seek and to save that which was lost. Thus He goeth after it, *until* he find it; that is, not merely (according to Bengel) seeking the sinner even at the table where he sits in his sins, but in the essential truth of His words, seeking *till* the death of the cross; seeking us by penetrating the depths of our misery and our curse, since only there and only thus we might be found! Consequently, the *coming home* of the Son of Man, who had gone forth to seek and to save the lost children of men, must indicate His return to His own proper house as the Son of God; to the heaven whither He carries back His saved ones. All this is most plainly declared, as we have already said, in the literal words of ver. 7, *Likewise—in heaven*, and most significantly the ἔσται pointing to futurity. This man, this shepherd, is thus at the same time the Lord from heaven, so transcendently high in Himself, yet so condescending towards the objects of His gracious seeking! It is a still further condescension of the great Proprietor that He summons others to share His joy; for He who thus speaks to others, places them, as it were, on a level with Himself. The *joy* is in itself so great, that it is as if He is not sufficient for it Himself, but increases His gladness and the complacency of His love by the sympathy of others! What depths of Divine συγκατάβασις in the real truth which is undeniably involved in such figures as these! The man in the parable has friends and neighbours around him, who are his fellows—thus deals the Lord with those who are with Him *in heaven!* Looking at the profound difference between the two parables, we very much doubt whether here also, as in ver. 10, the angels of God *only* are to be understood. Meyer observes

—Among the angels and the blessed; Bengel understands here in the first instance only the spirits of the just made perfect (comparing Rev. xviii. 20), but this is opposed by the circumstance that the φίλοι καὶ γείτονες are obviously not themselves πρόβατα. Συγκαλεῖν is the specific expression for an invitation to a *feast*, and hence the "friends and neighbours" are only parabolically so designated—see ch. xiv. 12. (For the poor and the maimed cannot be invited in heaven!) Moreover, we should not seek a profounder distinction (with Bengel) between the friends in sentiment and will, and the neighbours in dwelling and locality. Such thoughts may very easily be pushed too far, as, for example, the edifying observation—What joy will then arise, when the sinner is brought safely home at last! (Is there joy in heaven at thy conversion, and will there be none at thy glorification? Baxter.) For the Lord regards the converted man here as already fully saved and brought home; embracing all in one comprehensive figure. Oh how graciously does His saying proceed—"*My* sheep—which was *lost—that which* was so known to you, the inhabitants of heaven, as well as to Me, in whose fate ye share My interest, so that I may well call upon you for your sympathy and joy!" The fulness of the meaning of each word has an inexhaustible influence for the heart, even after we have clearly expounded it to our minds. Just as according to that low analogy, which the Lord does not disdain to use, the tenderness of the shepherd feeling may be exhibited in man as a shepherd towards the animal creation—so does the Lord of heaven look down upon the pitiable objects of His compassion upon earth. Just as we ourselves rejoice over the fortunate *finding* of what it has cost us pains to seek, however trivial a thing it may be in itself—even so is there joy in heaven in the presence of God and His angels, even such is the rejoicing of the Son of God who returneth home with the precious thing that He hath retrieved!

We must not pass over, in our familiarity with the formula, the majestic *I say unto you!* which forms the sublime transition to the interpretation of this most condescending parable. "I am that Shepherd, and this I say unto *you*, shepherds of Israel; to you who murmur and blame me I speak, the Son of Man who am come from heaven, and will soon return to heaven

again as My home; I, who know full well what passes there (as afterwards, chap. xvi. 23, what passes in hell),—I say unto you that joy shall be in heaven over that which causeth you offence upon earth! Joy, not over the sinner in his sin, but over his repentance; though ye, in your heartless presumption, allow no validity to that repentance, and would not that I should receive such a sinner! I say unto you, that he will be more than *received* above, whatever ye may vainly say against it. Over *one* shall there be the joy of all heaven; and even if all who hear Me did not repent, if only one of them repented, the joy of finding him would repay all the toil of seeking him. Ye reject all sinners alike in mass; to Me every one, for his own sake and for the sake of My love, is inestimably precious and dear." We have already shown upon Matt. xviii. that the Saviour's joy in recovering the sinner refutes the notion of any irresistible grace. Not that the sheep seeketh the Shepherd; unless he were sought and called he would continue lost. But, on the other hand, he may oppose instead of following the recognised voice of the Shepherd; not, therefore, all who are lost are found again, or yield themselves to be saved, and this is the reason of the joy which is felt over that one which is recovered. The μετανοεῖν is effected by the seeking love of God; but does not consist entirely and alone in the energy of that love. This is perfectly exemplified in those others who are now brought into contrast; the designation of whom in the parable as "*not* lost" is now qualified by a tone of lamentation and complaint in the interpretation of the parable. A sinner who repenteth is a sinner no longer, he becometh truly righteous;—but what of the ninety and nine just persons? Their true characterisation has been given upon Matt. ix. 12, 13. The gracious severity of the words set out with the assumption that their righteousness was valid; but when they murmur where the inhabitants of heaven rejoice, the question naturally arises whether their righteousness can be genuine.[1] This is the

[1] The Lord recognises no just persons who never needed, or even who no longer need, repentance:—and every application which involves this is a perversion. Braune, *e. g.*, speaks of the "innocent, who have not yet experienced or become conscious of evil, and who in the simplicity of their hearts are just before God," as contrasted with "sinners who have passed beyond the line of innocence;" but the former could only be the *angels*,

second condemnation of the Pharisees which is hinted; the first having been already directed against their neglect of their pastoral duty. This closing sentence, further (which coincides with ch. v. 32), proves assuredly that the one sheep cannot be, in the meaning of this parable, the human race as requiring redemption; for the ninety and nine ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ are neither the angels nor the just made perfect in heaven. He who lists may, however, *go beyond* the limits of the parable, and regard the Lord as having one great flock throughout the universe, to which the human race, lost till He goes after it, is related as the one saved sinner, is related to all the others as the one to the ninety and nine![1]

Vers. 8–10. We have already exhibited the essential point of this second parable, which alas is in most sermons and expositions lightly despatched as dependent upon the former, or left altogether unnoticed. It is not the Holy Ghost, as He is a hypostasis in the depths of the Godhead, but as He hath built for Himself a *house* upon earth, and obtained for Himself a *possession*. The *church* as a whole and individual *churches*—both are, in a certain sense, the same. The *Spirit* in the *church*, as the true mother of that *house* which the great Proprietor possesses not only in heaven but also upon earth, seeks, in like manner, the lost piece of silver, and similarly rejoices over it amid

who however occupy their own quite different place in vers. 7, 10, and are never called just in Scripture, but always holy ones. This would issue in making our Lord preach the doubtful doctrine that "virtue transcends innocence," against which we cannot be too much on our guard, as grazing the confines of the view that man's fall into sin is his line of progress towards maturity. Righteousness in scriptural phraseology is never mere innocence, nor untried and unconfirmed virtue; and as the "just persons" in ver. 7 are upon *earth* (for should not the angels in heaven rejoice over themselves as righteous?) it remains that it is here only a *preliminary hypothesis* which is assumed, with an underlying tone of irony.

[1] "Should not that great and glorious Shepherd whose millions of bright sheep fill the universe, leave these millions in order to seek the slightest, poorest, most infirm of those who need His care, and without that care would utterly perish; does not His boundless love require Him to go after it?" (Kurz, Bibel u. Astronomie, S. 220). This is a thought quite permissible in itself, but, as an exposition of what eternal Wisdom has spoken, it is not valid.

the sympathies of all angels and good spirits. Thus the meaning of our Lord's words, spoken for futurity (Matt. xxiv. 35), goes here, as it often, or, we may say, always does, far beyond the sense which those who heard them first were then capable of putting upon them. Nevertheless, even then an attentive and thoughtful Scribe might have been led by the symbolical seeking *woman* to think of the congregation of the people of God, of the קָהָל or עֵדָה of the Lord; in the name, and as the servant and representative of which, he himself should also have sought the lost. But let it be observed *now* that the house built upon earth is not introduced till *after* He who had come is gone home again to His house in heaven (ver. 7). The substitution of the piece of silver as designating the sinner, gives us, in addition to the important meaning which we indicated above, the idea of a progression *in his value:* a lost animal, a lost piece of money, and finally, a lost *son!*[1] For, the more closely we regard and realise the sinner's final misery and first apostasy as leading to it, the more impressively does his value in himself assert itself. The number hence becomes smaller: at first a hundred, now ten, afterwards reduced to two. This is not designed simply to teach that the enumeration in itself is not to be interpreted; but the *ten* pieces of silver indicate in passing that the woman is not so rich as to be indifferent to the loss of even *one* piece; that is, one soul is estimated by the Spirit in the church, not in the proportion which one piece would bear to the hoard of a man with millions, but in its proportion to the scanty store of such a woman as this. The church counts her possessions carefully, is unwilling to give up anything as lost, and speaks of it when lost with all the more emphasis as —*my* piece! As the Lord also on Matt. xxii. 20, 21 compares man with a piece of money, referring by the *image and superscription* to the stamp of God primarily on Israel, and then generally on humanity in general, so must we not altogether exclude an analogous sideglance in our present passage. The piece of silver lying under the dust in its corner retains its own essential value, but it would remain *dead* and *lost* as to purposes of possession

[1] Not therefore conversely in anti-climax, as we find in Stein—not only a sheep, which has a sensitive enjoyment of its life, but even an insignificant piece of money! The tenth part of her little store is not insignificant to the woman.

(as we speak of dead and useless capital), if it should remain unsought and unfound.[1] In a more restricted reference the Lord especially intends those who have already belonged to the church, and fallen in it; because *in them* the loss and the ruin is exhibited in its most impressive point of view: the discourse afterwards takes a deeper and more retrospective view, and regards every sinner as having been once in the house of God, in the heaven or paradise of innocence—of which more anon.

Lighting, sweeping, seeking: three critical points which are not alluded to without significance, and which point to the true signification of the γυνή. We cannot *seek* in the dark, because we cannot *see*. Then the lamp of preaching must first be kindled in the Gospel; and the voice of preaching is the voice, continued upon earth, of Him who is gone into heaven:—it is the Spirit who testifies in that preaching; but yet the church lights these lamps, by selecting and appointing her own true witnesses, chosen from her midst, and exercising their functions in her name. As to individual churches, this light may in some cases altogether disappear, but in *the church* never; she, that is, the Holy Spirit, in her, continues ever to kindle them anew. However much the disguising *dust*, in its various kinds, may itself glisten or shine—it is, and can be no other than darkness and death; the true light must shine upon, and disperse it utterly. For with *this* light is associated, and in absolutely necessary union, the *sweeping* of the house in all the further ordinances and regulations of the ecclesiastical economy, administration of discipline, and exercise of supervision; the removal out of the way of all hindrances and offences, of all hypocritical pretexts and concealments, so as to leave no corner unvisited by the light, and nothing hidden in the dust:—and all this is done by the true energy of life accompanying the true light. This sweeping does indeed at first seem to create dust where dust was not before, *exciting* it throughout the house for the sake of the object lost; and even so this work of the Spirit in the church is

[1] This view, which is quite in harmony with our present passage, and with the comparison between man and the tribute money, has no affinity with the strange and inappropriate question of Beck—"What makes the money *false* or *genuine?* Not the external brilliance, or the stamp upon it, but the false or genuine metal of its substance."

complained against as unpleasantly disturbing the deceitful course of death, and interfering with the false peace and amenity of the house. Finally, the end and aim of all this lighting and sweeping is the real and thorough *seeking* for souls. We may further say that the first is preeminently assigned to the minister of the word as such, the second to his helpers and elders, and the cooperation in the great work of seeking to the whole church generally. When this proceeds in all its vigour, the church is filled with life; and, thus living, will not indolently suffer her treasures to be lost, but seeking and finding them will edify herself in the Holy Ghost.

Nothing is said here in ver. 9 of coming home, for the woman who seeks is already in her own house:—the Spirit abideth in the church. Hence also in ver. 10 (though this is generally overlooked) not the "angels *in heaven*" are mentioned; any more than the Future ἔσται, which now becomes the Present γίνεται. The angels of God, although they always behold the face of the Father in heaven, are at the same time cooperant upon earth in the seeking and preservation of those who are to be, and are, the heirs of salvation: they are present in the church (1 Cor. xi. 10); everywhere, and here especially, there is a close connection and fellowship between heaven and earth. The friends and the neighbours who run together after the manner of women (very much as if to rejoice over the birth of a child, see Ruth iv. 14, 17; Luke i. 58), must not be regarded simply as a necessary appendage of the figure; for, in this wondrous series of parables, there is not the slightest touch which does not yield its meaning. Bengel's remark upon the distinction between the angels as "foris, habitu virili, bellis apto;" and "domi, habitu pacifico et feminino," may be justly deemed far-fetched; but it will much better correspond with the truth if we refer to the hosts, or, as it were, the congregations of spirits.[1] Suffice, that in each case there is *joy* in the presence of the angels of God when a sinner begins his conversion, and opens his heart for the birth of his Saviour, even as there was angels' joy in Bethlehem; yea, there is joy over the beginning of every new

[1] Let it be remembered that the collective idea in Hebrew is expressed by the feminine.

creation, like that first joy over creation when the light sprung forth from the darkness (Job xxxviii. 7. See Eph. iii. 10; 1 Pet. i. 12). This world is the nursery of that world; and every little plant is greeted as a new accession to the glory of God, to the joy of all who are saved in Him, and to His joy, as the Saviour, in them.

THE SEEKING, RECEIVING, FORBEARING LOVE OF THE FATHER TOWARDS THE PENITENT AND THE SELF-WILLED, THE OPEN AND THE CONCEALED SINNER: THE TWO SONS.

(Luke xv. 11–32.)

If it were allowable to introduce here the distinctions applicable to human things, we might term this parable the crown and the pearl of all our Lord's parables. How many words would it require to express all the feelings of reverent astonishment with which we ever contemplate and study it! How simple, yet how profound; how transparently artless as a chapter of human life, and yet how full of mystery as a revelation of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; how perfectly natural is the picture as a whole, and yet how full of significance down to the slightest and minutest features and touches; how eternally riveted on the memory are the words, how inexhaustibly to be explored their ever new evolutions of meaning; with what dramatic life is all related, so that every fresh clause suggests in itself a whole history, which one is involuntarily constrained to pursue for himself; and, again, with what force does every word arrest the conscience, and point to the parabolical application of the whole; —in short, to sum all in one word, how *Divine-human* is this parable of the God-man! So individually characteristic is it, that no other is its fellow; while so universally comprehensive that "*we* all must find ourselves reproduced in this parable in some sense, either as we have become, or as we have ever been, or as we are hoping and endeavouring to be!"[1] And we cannot

[1] Nitzsch, in his sermons (erste Auswahl, von Bonn 1833), constructed for academical and educated hearers, but full of the very marrow of exegesis —from which we shall take leave to extract much more.

but remark how the blessed Lord, almost in opposition to His usual manner, speaks and points so *movingly* to the sentiment and feelings; as if His affectionate love aims to affect and to break, if that might be, even the hardest hearts. That this parable, which Lange beautifully terms "a gospel within the Gospel," this universal text for preaching about the lost and recovered sons of our heavenly Father (and the hopelessly lost firstborn in the rich possessions of the house), should be wanting in the pericopæ of the Sunday kalendar, is an omission which is utterly unjustifiable on any ground whatever, which is not compensated by the insertion of the previous similitudes, and which of itself is ample reason for that reformation of the kalendar which Palmer desires.

We shall not repeat what has been already said as to the position and significance of this parable in connection with the whole, but proceed to develop its individual meaning. We are called to regard the Lord's complete answer to the Pharisees, in the double picture so impressively contrasted, and which yet preaches the one love of God:—how the *manifestly apostate* sinner (with honesty, at least, in his sin), coming in *penitence*, is *received* again; how the *secretly apostate* sinner (secretly in hypocrisy), even while he is wilfully revolting against his father and his brother, is *borne with* in mercy, is graciously intreated, and even *still sought!*

Ver. 11. A hundred sheep—ten pieces of silver—and now *two* sons: this last introduces a *having* of a very different kind, and consequently, a very different, and now first perfect joy, in the recovery after *losing!* The limitation in number to *two* concentrates the attention upon the contrast, exhibited in vers. 7 and 10, between the lost and what was preliminarily assumed to be not lost; bringing out that contrast now into sharp prominence, as a main element in all these parables. A certain man had two *sons*, that is, he was the *father* of both! To understand Christ Himself as this father, is contrary to the sacred propriety of all His habitual speech, whether parabolical or otherwise, in which He never forgets that He Himself is the true *Son;* and, as we have said, is decisively confuted by a profounder investigation of the whole. *God*, as the Father or great Creator, has *sons*, self-conscious, endowed with will, begotten in His likeness—and these are not so

much all intelligent creatures, though this is sometimes assumed, as men created in Adam after the image of God; for, "Adam was the son of God," ch. iii. 38. To say that God is originally the "Father of all His intelligent creatures," presents us only with a half-truth; but to say that He is and remains the Father of men, even in their apostasy, is a whole truth, Jas. ii. 9; Acts xvii. 28, 29; Eph. iii. 15.[1] Every "sinner" was once, in his first beginning and going forth from God (even if only in Adam), a child in the house (created in *the Son*); every "righteous person," who comes forward into contrast as thinking himself such, will also in that house declare and prove himself to be a yet greater sinner himself. The universal paternal grace extends to the vilest as consequent upon that first essential birth, while the universal ruin of sin extends to the most honourable as consequent upon actual birth in time; thus the two parties are exhibited in these two sons, whose history is now depicted, and to whom the Lord now speaks, as being originally and fundamentally alike before God.

Now first is the so-called *sinner* placed in the true light which Divine love sheds upon him; and we have here depicted to us:—his *sin*, vers. 12 to 16; his *repentance*, vers. 17–20; his *reception back again*, vers. 20–24. We have now, more definitely than in the two former parables, "the gradational development of departure from God, and return to Him by repentance and faith;" the profoundest and inmost beginning and end both of sin and of return, with all that in both cases lies intermediate. First of all, and this is the distinctive starting point of the parable, we have *sin* as such and in its essential self—its *origin* (ver. 12), *development* or process (ver. 13, in the way indicated by the lost sheep), and *consummation* (also ver. 13, having reached the goal indicated by the lost money). But then is immediately adjoined the *misery* which follows on sin, and is inseparably one with it; this also is viewed in its threefold critical aspect:—the beginning of want, ver. 14, which is the first consciousness and realisation of distance and estrangement; the recourse to false help, ver. 15, which is only the continuation and confirmation of apostasy; and finally the aggravated and

[1] On this last passage, comp. my Epheserbrief, especially Vol. i. p. 497.

intenser want, ver. 16, which lays bare the whole depth of the misery which it has drawn after it.

Vers. 12, 13. It is because the Lord will preserve to this "righteous" one in the figure the pre-eminence of the prerogative of the firstborn, that the *younger* is introduced as the unfilial and lost son; nor need we look for any other reason—such as a relative apology for his folly in his youth, which was also in its time true of the other also. By this figure of a grown-up son, who will be a "young man before his time, and endures not to wait for his inheritance till his father dies," who is furiously urged by the lust for emancipation, that the Lord's wisdom, which always contemplates the fundamental principles below the surface, would exhibit to us the innermost essence of all sin in its original source. The son breaks loose from his father; is no longer satisfied with the common enjoyment of all his goods, because he cannot longer tolerate the fellowship of his righteous father, whose authority had so long constrained him to obedience; his will is to live independently and *for himself*, to carry away *his own* goods as a spoil, to seek his miserable happiness by infatuated wisdom of his own in the enjoyments of a free life:—and in this we see the punctum saliens in all our apostasy from the living God, our Creator, and our Father! His own good things in unholy appropriation preponderate, in the mind of this son, over the favour of his father enjoyed in filial love; he confronts that father with a selfish demand, which seems to possess, yet is in reality utterly without, reason:—and in this we see the speedily resulting, and apparently entire death and extinction of all filial sentiment, the root of all and every sin, more exceeding sinful in this its albeit secret and deeply latent principle than in all the subsequent wanderings and riotous abandonment to evil which necessarily springs from it. And even if we go no further than the external possessions of which chap. xvi. 1–13 will speak (though the words go much deeper), yet we must regard the Lord as explaining and condemning prospectively the root of the ἀδικία which clings to all mammon—the improper appropriation of that which should be alien to us, in contempt of our true possessions in the fellowship of God. Δός μοι—seems, indeed, to be the supplication of the son as following the Πάτερ of invocation; but the μοί itself presents him as

making a demand, and it is followed by a juristical formula which seems to regard himself and his father as equal persons, with equal rights. Τὸ ἐπιβάλλον μέρος is genuine Greek (as Grotius shows), and is used also with reference to inheritance in Tob. vi. 12, as also to the taxes imposed on a dependent people, 1 Macc. x. 30. The son stands upon his right, therefore, just as men think that they have a right as creatures to expect from the Creator an ἄρτος ἐπιούσιος (and forsooth, the whole befitting μέρος which their ordinary life requires); yet is he constrained, at the outset of his wandering, to pay an involuntary tribute to the truth, for his prayer is—*Give* me now that which will *one day* be my just portion (as if the father had not the right, *as long as he lived*, to disinherit disobedient children!) "I request that my portion be given me"—in which the demand at the close preponderates over the petition at the beginning.[1] But this is not the sudden impulse of desire in an evil hour, which might be reasoned with; it is the resolved and stedfast disposition which the father had seen growing till the period of this outbreak, and which itself silently proclaimed the sad severance of the internal bond. *Therefore* the *father* does not place himself in opposition, resting upon his rightful prerogative; he does not become to this unfilial child a despotic and restraining master, but remains his *father* still:—for a father even among men is unwilling to find a *servant* in a *son* (comp. ver. 19 afterwards), and would rather let that son take his freedom, when he knows that all his representations and prayers would be fruitless in keeping his *child*. That our heavenly Father dismisses us with our freedom, when we would depart from Him, is the result at once of His *holy righteousness* (averse from all merely external compulsion), and of that mercy also which does not

[1] The Lord exhibits here in its ground and beginning that which, however, is immeasurably surpassed in its subsequent developments in the world at large, when the proud sinners of the last time demand from their so-called God, now and in this life, all that they care nothing about in another. Yet does the Lord speak prophetically for this last secular manifestation of the evil principles of that apostate, selfish sin which would wrest all that the future has for the present time. Communism lyingly speaks about equal distribution among many brethren:—we know full well that such liberalism means all for self in reality, and in any case goes far beyond the ἐπιβάλλον μέρος in its demands.

leave us, but ever seeks our return. For while, on the one hand, He bestows upon the son who forsakes His house an actual inheritance, it is foreseen, on the other, that in his estrangement it will be consumed, and that distress must in due time recall the deserter. He who suffers us to go our way has already taken care that it shall be hedged in with thorns. Hos. ii. 6. Thus, if this third parable makes it *appear* at first (as Roos says), "that the father took no more thought about his lost son," that semblance is soon all the more impressively removed.

And he divided unto them the inheritance. In the parable, primarily, the elder (as first-born) obtained, or was secured in the prerogative of, the landed possession, the proper paternal *inheritance;* while the younger had in compensation his μέρος dealt out to him. Thus, all else that belonged to the father remained to the elder; yet as a son in the house *with his father*, so that he could yet dispose of it at his pleasure, ver. 31. It might have appeared, indeed, that he who was emancipated according to his own desire had more enjoyment of freedom; but that was only a delusion of the unfilial mind. And let the distinction—never sufficiently noted—between the οὐσία and βίος be carefully observed; for the Evangelist, under the direction of the Holy Ghost, gives every little word its distinct and accurate place. The idea of the former goes deeper than that of the latter. The son will have the very *substantia* of his estate, that which properly belonged to his essential personality and existence; without knowing that his words involve (according to the moral relation between personality and possession) something very different from that which a man may eat and drink, spend and consume: of the father it is only said that he gave up τὸν βίον (as far, consequently, as the son wished) to his discretion to be wasted. *That* was to this foolish spendthrift *his* οὐσία (ver. 13); and it was this which he squandered utterly, after having converted it *all* into money, and *gathered all together* into a compact transportable form (as Prov. xxiii. 21, xxi. 17, pave the way for our parable);—but we shall see that something very different remained for him in the depths of his father's heart. Indeed, no sooner has this fool obtained his own, than he makes haste to show why he had demanded it: —μετ' οὐ πολλὰς ἡμέρας he appropriates all, and goes to another land (properly, into a certain other country), into his own free-

dom and the freedom of his own, to become a young master on his own account, anything so as to be out of his father's house and beyond his discipline. And if the μακράν here belongs to the χώραν (comp. chap. xix. 12, Prov. vii. 19), and does not as in ver. 20 stand adverbially, then it adds an emphasis of its own —as far as possible away! In this emphatic and most pregnant μακράν, which significantly combines with the last hypocritical πάτερ (used by the younger as by the elder son), the spirit of apostasy and departure from God is exhibited as the full consummation of sin. The neighbourhood of the father is irksome to the fallen child and urges him to widen his distance, until Augustin's word seems to be fulfilled: regio longinqua est *oblivio* Dei. Now *lives* the sinner in that land a life which he thinks worthy of the name; but then begins and is consummated his death, for his father must bewail him as dead; he lives ἀσώτως, that is, a self-destroying life, without salvation or help—and hence this intense word became the chosen expression to indicate all kinds of external debauchery and recklessness of riot.[1] The χώρα ἐκείνη is wherever such erring children have wandered from their *Father*, wherever they are *dwelling* afar from Him, wherever they vainly attempt to build a city, like Cain in Nod, the land of unsteady wandering from the face of God, apart from which there is neither life nor salvation. All creaturely possession consumes itself in the using (Col. ii. 22); and all wealth must ever turn to poverty, either by its actual dissipation, or in consequence of the folly of covetousness which, the more mammon increases, is the less satisfied by it. Thus man in his sin consumes first of all his earthly goods, so that he can no more find his satisfaction and comfort in them; but then, alas, the true and real possessions which his heavenly Father communicated to him are also consumed, the life derived from God dies out in alienation (Eph. iv. 18)—unless a seasonable repentance saves its last spark. So in the primitive world the first race of men squandered away in mass the original prerogatives of natural possession, as well as

[1] "Ασωτος, ὁ δι' αὑτὸν ἀπολλύμενος. Aristot. Eth. iv. 1. This history is everywhere and perpetually finding its external realisation in the lives of the slaves of lust. Eph. iv. 22. When people are "lords of their means, but not lords of their desires"—waste, poverty, and ruin must follow. (Zeller.)

the consciousness and heritage of fellowship with God; such, when viewed in its profoundest principle, is the way of every individual soul; thus was it, more particularly (and this lying midway between the two may be regarded as the most immediate application of the parable), with the chosen people of God in their apostasy. Out of an innocent child (whose first creation by God is reflected, at least, in a certain relative guiltlessness), out of a baptized and confirmed Christian, there comes forth one who draws near to say farewell to his Father as in ver. 12; an independent, that is, an apostate, self-destroying, and lost son—such is the whole history of sin! But when the Father first of all punishes this unholy desire by granting it, as at the graves of lust in the wilderness, He nevertheless deals with our inborn freedom in long-suffering as wise as it is merciful; that increate principle of freedom He regards in His children even in its wanderings with a Divine paternity which infinitely transcends any figure by which it may be illustrated.

Vers. 14–16. As lightly and swiftly as *all had been gathered together* is *all scattered again*, wasted, spent;[1]—such is the general picture here given of the folly which thinks life long, and never regards its end. The misery of want now begins, treading closely on the heels of lawless riot. This keen and pressing want of hunger marks a critical point of the similitude, wherein it must fail adequately to illustrate the truths which were intended; but the Lord so incorporates the expression in the parable as that it preserves its appropriate relation to the narrative, while suggesting to the thoughtful mind the deeper truth which it fails entirely to set forth. For, most assuredly, that hunger, which is the destitution of the true and only satisfying bread, must be regarded as always existing in *that land* (as it is twice defined most significantly, after its first mention in ver. 13, and then in the ὧδε of ver. 17 exhibited in its most impressive contrast—as alienated and far from the father's house); but that destitution becomes a necessity or a longing, a manifest

[1] Διεσκόρπισε is obviously in ironical contrast with συναγαγών; and then πάντα points again to the previous ἅπαντα, while δαπανᾷν yet more ironically reprobates the *spending all*—for nothing!

λιμός, only when it is keenly felt in the soul. The Lord here goes beyond the parable as revolving round this one son, and obliquely intimates how the ruling grace of God sends visitations of general calamity into the domain of this sinful world, which make the misery felt and salvation an object of desire (comp. Amos viii. 11). This great truth, however, is only grazed in the broad κατὰ τὴν χώραν ἐκείνην; and the Lord, for His immediate object's sake, places the famine of the land generally in striking connection by its ἐγένετο with the consummated squandering of the substance of him who had wandered into it, as if it had been the simple consequence of his reckless waste. And so it seems as if we are no further to think of this λιμός than as it respects the spendthrift's participation in it, and impending starvation. How much is shadowed forth, again, in this ὑστερεῖσθαι, as to the deep internal progress of the history of the sinner! To every one this time must come, especially to every one—as in this parable's point of view—who has fallen into the gross wilfulness of outward sin. The time passes merrily for a while, but the pleasure of life soon dies out, the possessions and the strength are lavished away, the relishes of mad joy which once befooled the heart are now untasted;—suffice that that heart, the still existent ἔσω ἄνθρωπος, begins now to be in want, to feel the fearful horror of its most bitter emptiness and distress. No matter whether viewed as external or internal—for it must always come at last to the sense of inward want. Thus we can understand the further description of the ensuing misery. Slavery, instead of the independence so madly chosen; detestable humiliation even among the associates of apostasy in this wicked world; and finally, the last vain endeavour to find the sustenance of life in resources which degrade to the level or below the level of the brutes. The colours are strong, laid on unsparingly, but in perfect truth. The heathen land indicated by the swine, signified to the Jews the region of sin and impurity, in the foul shame of which this son of a very different household must sink into a swineherd. The land, indeed, is full of such as he (sinners are many upon earth)—that is the first intimation. But the strong expression which speaks of the *citizens* of that land means still more, and involves an evident contrast with the immigrant who had not yet become a citizen

therein. Those in whom the last filial feeling (ver. 17) is extinct, and who think no longer of any former better home, are the true citizens of this evil world; such as would still return like this son in the parable, are the scattered children of God in their midst. Jno. xi. 52.

First of all, the wretched one *beginning* to be in want, seeks to help himself, in perverse and blindly persistent apostasy; turning to resources which can only issue in his own worse misery, and thus drive him against his own purposes to that conversion which is the design of God's grace. His heart does not yet and at once say—I will up and go to my father! but before that there is to be another πορευθείς. Many interpret the ἐκολλήθη of humble and urgent *begging*, which fastens itself upon another and will not be gainsayed:—Give me something, make me something, even though it be a keeper of swine, only let me not starve and perish! But this seems an incorrect anticipation of the stages of humiliation, as they are stated with precision; this κολλᾶσθαι gives us rather the twofold commencement of misery, as resulting from foolish recourse to self for help. He enters into stricter fellowship with the heathens and sinners of the place (which he had in a sense avoided before, from the remains of shame in him); but this fellowship of attachment of itself can only result in *dependence*, he gives himself up to bondage, pledges himself wholly to the world. This, then, is the abasement, in which the wretched wages of sin must become loathsome to him as swine's food, while he remembers the bread of heaven. The world, and every one of its citizens, is a hard master, in whose services the most pitiable wages are given, yea, not even food to eat; well for every prodigal who is constrained to realise this, and does realise it! The κεράτια, which Luther has quite correctly popularised into *husks*,[1] indicate, according to the predominant reference which the parable involves to sinners of the grossest degree, the last defilement, the bestial turpitude of the foulest fleshly lust—although even this may assume various forms, admits

[1] St John's bread, or goat's horn, the hulls of a leguminous plant which in the East is the food of cattle and swine, and often the nourishment of the poorest in times of distress. The Syr. has חרובא, which corresponds with the Talmudical חֲרוּבָא for the same fruit.

of many degrees, and may be disguised under specious aspects. What the beast is to man, that the carnal man, the natural man generally with his pleasures and needs, is to the nobler part of himself, the spirit to be awakened in conversion; it is not, therefore, an external change, the alteration in objects and manner of life simply, which is needed to turn into husks that which before was so sweet and pleasant. (Prov. ix. 17, xx. 17.) For if the sinner has once reached the point at which the parable here exhibits him, he is constrained by experience to confess the worthlessness and the utter disgracefulness of his sinful life; yet this is so far from being the voluntary conversion of his will, that he might even in this depth despise the call of the living God, and exhort his soul to eat and drink as if at the most excellent table;[1] and thus, if his most outrageous desires were gratified, arrive at a point in which he should take his place among the other thriving citizens. We see, in this normal type of a penitent sinner, that even he at least for a while *desires* only to be fed with these husks! The common translation, however, and that which Luther has retained, is incorrect; our feeling would never allow us to admit—And no man gave *them* unto him! As if, had only the swine's food been supplied to him, he would *not* have gone back to his father! a feature this which would derange and distort the harmony of the whole picture. It is indeed said in regard to this prevalent interpretation, that in the time of dearth his swine were more important to the citizen than their keeper (but we may ask whether the herdsman was not necessary *for them!*), but such a notion introduces an incongruous extravagance quite foreign to the measured character of the whole parable. And further—who could have prevented the swineherd from taking some portion for himself in connection with the animals, on which supposition alone the *giving* to him would have been needful.[2]

The general οὐδείς does not suit this view; nor his experience, already alluded to, that these κεράτια, which the swine might *eat* as their natural and fitting nourishment, could only *fill* without

[1] We cannot but think of that verse of the great poet—"Uns ist ganz kannibalisch wohl, als wie fünfhundert Saüen!"

[2] Though the answer has been devised—that he would have to prepare them by cooking for himself!

nourishing and satisfying his hungering belly.[1] This is, once more, a piercing truth—the pleasures of sin, as those who delight in them must find, fill but never satisfy; comp. Lu. vi. 25; Jno. iv. 13; Eccles. i. 8, and, in the same words as here, Ps. xvii. 14. And here what sin would do, becomes its punishment—the debauched and riotous liver had before filled his belly, while no animal, no swine, eats more than enough, overstepping the limits of nature. In the similar application in Lu. xvi. 21, it is supposed that many crumbs fell to Lazarus from the rich man's table, the ἐπιθυμῶν indicating his pious contentment—and here also we must understand that the poor swineherd ate readily of the husks, seized them with avidity, *for* (as καὶ often signifies), *no man* troubled himself about his case, or *gave* him a just sufficiency for his maintenance; and this *absolute* use of δίδωμι Alford lays stress upon, concurrently with myself. Thus it is—No man *gave him* anything else, any human nourishment, any *bread*. This immediately leads to the περισσεύειν ἄρτων in the father's house, of which he at last thinks with a true ἐπιθυμεῖν; and this is said also, in passing, to the hard "just ones," who would with like scorn leave the "publicans and sinners" to their trough, instead of feeling compassion for their case.

Vers. 17–20. The *penitent* sinner now stands revealed before our eyes! *Penitence*, in its fullest meaning, or the voluntary prosecution of the *purpose* into the great *act*, is the actual arising and *coming* to the Father; but before this comes the resolution of *repentance*, which is developed here with almost systematic completeness as proceeding from the inmost soul. For Jesus explains in *this* parable how far penitence must, like sin, proceed *voluntarily:* and in this there is a contrast with the sheep, wandering in stupidity, and in stupidity not coming back of itself; and still more with the lost piece of money. Yet both sides of the question are equally true. Repentance, as a resolution, thus develops itself:—in its origin as a return into self and remembrance of the father—in its most essential process as a consciousness of misery, and that as the judicial consequence of sin—and

[1] The contrast expressly established in the text between γεμίσαι τὴν κοιλίαν and ἤσθιον, confutes the application which Braune makes—He might *not even like* the swine satisfy himself. There is no *not even* in the description.

finally in its consummation as a turning round, a confession, and a vow. Or, transferred into systematic phraseology, Repentance is first knowledge and conviction of sin, and then resolution (although in that first knowledge the latent *will* must cooperate; for it is the inmost principle and root, as of the act so also of the self-knowledge in repentance); but knowledge of misery, as also of the guilt and sin which has produced it,—resolution not only to return but to confess. As it respects the third critical point, the promise of work and new obedience, we shall afterwards find something which requires cautious handling in that.

It is well expressed in the translation—*When he came to himself!* thus not before, but now at last! Thus far was it necessary that it should go with him! This is the rule which has its external exemplification in multitudes of cases:—How many must first go on to the most shameful excesses of sin before they come to know that sin! How many find not out their misery until after they have sought their consolation and help in the world by the profoundest humiliation of devotion to it! After they have been sent, as it were, to the swine, the long unheard and overpowered voice within them breaks out—Thou seekest it in the world to no purpose, it is *in thyself*, thou art a lost son, but still the *son* of a *father!* He *came* to himself—this is more accurate than Luther's popular "in sich schlagen," which incorrectly connects the subsequent act (ch. xviii. 13) with this simple beginning, thereby deranging the delicate connection of the text, as well as losing sight of a reference which it contains to Old Testament phraseology. When he *begins* to be in want, he *goes* and joins himself to a citizen; when his want reaches the point of extremest outward need, he *goes* that better way into himself, there finds he the right πορεύσομαι! See in Deut. xxx. 1 the same intimation—When thou shalt call to mind or go into thy heart (וַהֲשֵׁבֹתָ אֶל־לְבָבֶךָ comp. 1 Kings viii. 47, Isa. xlvi. 8). When the sinner truly goes into himself, he discerns himself by a yet remaining remembrance to be in the deepest reality an apostate son before God. Thus previously and in his sin, he was *out of* himself, had never contemplated and known himself in the simple truth of his condition and relations. And let the intimation in this similitude for the other and equally true aspect of the matter, be also observed. The voluntary

sinner was not altogether and absolutely a voluntary agent (there was in his case a blinding deceitfulness of sin and Satan, by which he had lost the power of entering into self); and further, his repentance was not altogether voluntary, but induced by the grace which sought him through the pressure of need. The first utterance of his heart is an awakening right remembrance of the forsaken father's house. We may for a moment hesitate how to interpret the mention of the *hired servants*, which the Lord, primarily in conformity with the literal similitude, connects with this remembrance; for we cannot suppose that any feature in the parable is indifferent and without its own proper allusion. We might rest in the general acceptation—How many people *still faithfully* serving him, industrious labourers, has my father! These would then be "the multitudes of saints whom the Lord of blessedness had received to blessedness, poor sinners whom He had already graciously and hospitably admitted."[1] But there must still be a difference between such and the μισθίοις here. For while this lost son is occupied in thinking—"There no man suffers want; even the hired servants, such as I am here, are better cared for than I, most miserable μίσθιος without μισθός, yea, even without food, which the meanest hireling is worthy of:"—while he is thus meekly instituting comparison with his own present condition, he cannot but bring also into contrast (for he remembers his *father* as such) his ἐγὼ δέ as the *son* having an original prerogative! To understand the matter aright, we must remember too that no one parable can express everything which is involved in its meaning; and that *remembrance* which here seems to well up naturally in the penitent's soul, is in the corresponding reality awakened by the call of God, which goes out through all that land not only in the voice of scarcity, but in open and direct *preaching*—Return again, ye who have revolted! But that preaching exerts its influence only where it excites and kindles the still existing spark—and *that* is the point of view which we must take in order

[1] Paulus Kind-Worte, wodurch man selig werden kann, in fünf Predigten über den verlornen Sohn. Cannstadt bei Richter, 1839. Impressive and awakening sermons, which, however, labour under the defect of neglecting the individualising exposition of the text, and caring only about the ecclesiastical and systematic theology to be evolved from it.

to understand what is here said—this explains the sinner's understanding that appeal. Thus it is not as if this sinner had now other converted sinners before his eyes; but his reflection signifies—How many orderly men (in comparison of me a reprobate!) receive temporal happiness from God![1] And here it is undeniable (as in the χώρα and the λιμός), that the parable extends beyond its own limits, that is, arises itself to press towards its interpretation.—The hired servants are now before the eyes of the son, even as the father's house is not removed from him by any distance of space.

And I, his son, perish with hunger, am dying the most frightful death! If this ἀπόλλυμαι becomes a consciousness to the soul, then is there life enough in it to seek and to find the bread of life. Now first is the external turned to an internal wretchedness, and is in contrast *felt* as misery by the soul. The ὧδε, which is unfortunately omitted by Luther (as by the Vulg.), and to the emphasis of which we have already referred, is certainly genuine, and has a distinctive significance in the spirit of the penitent's words—And I, the apostate son, perish *here*, because I by my own fault am here and not with my father, because I have chosen to leave him! *This* is my sin and my misery! The experience of misery led first from without inwardly to the knowledge of sin; but now conversely this knowledge speaks first and last of sin as the only cause of misery. Wherefore am I, wherefore *remain I here?* Thus from this ὧδε springs immediately that transcendently important and impressive Ἀναστὰς πορεύσομαι! The groundtone is—I *will* arise! for here we have the English distinction—the future *I will* and not *I shall.* But there is mingled with this an immediate resolution of instant

[1] It were going too far to make the premature distinction—How many merely *legally* faithful righteous servants, not yet children of God, are fed by His bounty, are more contented and happy than I! Such thoughts have no place here.—But the interpretation of von Gerlach is essentially incorrect, who speaks of "the lower creation of God" contrasted with which "only sinful *man* feels himself in his restless sin empty and miserable"—thus making "the contemplation of God's *creation* awaken to *repentance!*" This is a notion quite alien to the parable, and untrue in itself; for the *father's house* does not include the animal world and the lower creation, and *man* does not come to repentance in any other way than by coming *to himself.*

decision which admits not of being translated—I will do it! for there is no mere θέλω expressed. In the ἀναστάς (which primarily signifies the rallying from a state of impotent wretched despondency, though not without a gracious though slight pre-intimation of the resurrection of the dead one, ver. 24) Bengel sees the *primordia pœnitentiæ, accurate indicata;* but we should more accurately look for the true primordia in the earlier ἐλθὼν εἰς ἑαυτόν. The *arising* and the *going* are again two stages, hence repeated significantly in ver. 20. There is no despair, which would rest in the ἀπόλλυμαι—"All is lost with me, my salvation is impossible, I *can* no more return to my father!" When now the sinner—in a better sense than before in ver. 13—gathers all together that he has in himself, all that remains in him of the grace of creation, as well as all the influence of awakening, preventing grace already received—then can he do what he will. But he must also in act *go*, and actually go *to* the father. How many find this grievous; how many prefer to go to some other citizen of the country who may promise fairer and give more than the former! But in this *going* to the father there follows of itself the true *saying* unto him—even if that is only the language of *coming* itself, which often speaks most loudly.

Even in this "Pater peccavi"—as popular use has translated our Lord's expression of the sinner's heart's cry to the heart of the all-merciful Father—His shepherd-voice goes out after the wandering sheep, putting that language into the lips of sinful man. And what a word is this single ἥμαρτον in this place, the heartbreaking fulness of which the Holy Spirit teaches every penitent sinner from age to age to pour forth in many words! Impossible is it at first to set before God all the details of our life of sinfulness; but this one word is enough for Him, if it springs from the depths of earnestness, without any abatement of reservation or apology. The son in the parable alleges nothing in his own justification (youthful inconsideration, false counsellors, or the like), and is far from Adam's ancient defence, Gen. iii. 12, comp. Job xxxi. 33. How fundamental and thorough the meaning of his ἥμαρτον, is shown in the addition, without any unfolding, as it were, of his sin,—"I know what that is, I have sinned against *heaven* and before *thee!*" Is this to be put to the account of the parable simply, so that the son here

may be said to distinguish between heaven and his *human* father? Primarily it may be so—and, for the purpose of the figure, it may run—"Against *God*, crying to heaven, has my sin been committed, while I have been offending before thee, and against thee my *father;* not merely the offence against thee do I feel and confess, but above and before all the *sin* before God" (comp. Matt. xxi. 25; Ezra ix. 6; 2 Chron. xxviii. 9). But this twofold expression has its distinctive meaning in the interpretation of the parable, inverting the sense just given:—"I have sinned against the right and order of *heaven*, against the obedience of the kingdom of spirits subjected in obedience to law (a supplementary note for ver. 7), in that I have sinned against *Thee*, my Father, and the Father of all spirits!" And so, further,—"*Not merely* before all the angels and holy inhabitants of Thy house, pre-eminently, and first of all *in Thy sight.* I stand here a confessed, and convicted sinner! But I dare to come, and stand before Thy Holy Face." The two sentences—I *will* arise! I *have* sinned! were unconditional and decided; but the third follows as hypothetical, and carrying with it the latent spark of something not yet lost. Judas and Cain at once are ready to have nothing more to do with God; but this poor prodigal son has twice in his penitence spoken of his *father*, ver. 18 (and a third time, if we include ver. 17); and even the *being called* son, which he could not hope in reply[1] from him whom he yet ventures to address as "father," has in its undertone the timid and poignant suggestion—Although I *am* thy son, was once rightly so called. This evidently lies in the backward glance of *οὐκέτι*. The prayer descends from the tone of its first confession of absolute guilt, in a way which was as artless as it was justifiable, and uses a *μείωσις* which expresses the outgoing of the heart of a child towards the heart of a father. Instead of continuing, and prosecuting into all its detail, the *ἥμαρτον* which he had confessed—"I deserve to be banished from heaven and from thee, to be punished with the severest condemnation!" he takes courage to say no more than—"I am *no more* worthy to be called thy son;" although this indeed silently says—"Anything rather than this

[1] It is only this first unrejecting acceptance that he ventures to think upon, or that he is capable of thinking upon. His thoughts do not go on to that consummation of which Matt. v. 9 speaks.

has been my desert!" Had his words ended there they would have been a perfect model for all such sons so coming as he; his appeal would have been such as the "*father!*" which he had first spoken might have said in its own solitary and profound significance; the conclusion corresponding to that would have been the fitting and permitted supplication of a returning child, more self-abased than words would express—"But *father!* I *pray* thee, *receive* thy penitent son again, call me son once more!"

This repentance dares to hope for, but not to expect, forgiveness; hence scarcely has the son drawn involuntarily so near, than he falls back again in anxiety, ventures not to complete his petition, nor to close it in the way which we have indicated. Nitzsch therefore says too much, if we take him literally, when he preaches on this text of "an arising and coming with the whole trust of repentance, and with the entire repentance of trust." Profound and beautiful, but true only in a further stage, beyond this first return. "My whole spirit cries out—Father, make me anew, I am no more thy son!" But thus does not the son speak as yet; it is another ποίησόν με which he brings, of which anon. He *feels after* acceptance, forgiveness, renewal, but at the same time with a contradiction: this and no more can the natural reason and power attain unto—*entire* confidence is as much an effect of grace received as *entire* repentance.[1] The conclusion of reason from natural postulates and premises, the heart's wish and the heart's hope of the contrite sinner returning to a better life, approves the *possibility* of forgiveness of sins with God, but *only* the possibility—"*not* the fact and the actuality, since even the correctest perception of the paternal gracious character does not warrant the lost son to expect forgiveness with perfect assurance, before the wiser father declares himself. If, then, he thus goes, repents and confesses, yet must he ever stand in doubt whether forgiveness will actually be the result. Yea, the same reason (which deemed it possible on many grounds) may deem it now on other grounds altogether uncertain whether it may or can be so—a paradox this! No sooner does God forgive sin than the converted man comes into a new condition of blessedness, rest and peace, as if he had never

[1] The repetition of the confession, ver. 20, after the father's embrace, is somewhat thus to be viewed.

sinned; the remembrance of the sinful condition is effaced, and it *appears* as if he had been placed on a level with the holy, sinless creature which had never transgressed God's commandment. Now if the condition of these two is the same, notwithstanding that the *reformed* sinner must ever be one who has been an *actual* sinner—then our natural faculties cannot reconcile the forgiveness of sins with justice, that is, with the strictly proportionate goodness of God. Even the Christian who knows and believes in his heart that there will be more joy in heaven over the repenting sinner (Lu. xv. 7)—stumbles at this saying if he applies to it his mere reason; and is tempted to attribute to God some sort of *injustice* against more pious spirits and races of unsinning intelligences. He thinks (viewing the matter merely with his reason), that these may, like the elder son, have some cause to complain against God. And so—it remains to reason at the least an insoluble problem, how God can pardon sinners on repentance simply and yet remain righteous towards the unsinning, placing those on a level with these."[1] We may here see, by way of anticipation, how the error with its subjective truth of the penitent son's humility has already done justice to the proud pre-eminence of the righteous one, even before he had begun his murmuring.

But what is this error of humility with its *subjective* truth, the exhibition of which was so needful to the *objective* truth of this anthropological delineation? No other than the intended petition with which the son would close his appeal to his father, and which is seldom understood in all its depth of meaning. We have good grounds for admitting that "in this awakening return there is a *spark* of *confidence* towards the injured father; and thus penitence and *faith* together concur in that first faint feeling which now respects the formerly despised paternal character." (Berlenb. Bib.) But if in this son awakening to a return, there had been more than this slight spark of confidence in grace; if he had at once thought of being accepted as a son who had never

[1] Thus spake some time ago an upright Christian Kantian, whose practical reason approached much nearer to revelation than that of the notorious Hegelians of our time, who will have nothing to do with *repentance* and with—*sin*. See Immanuel, ein Buch für Christen und Juden. Berlin 1805, S. 183.

sinned, or had asked for and expected this at the first, then would his penitential humility have been inwardly untrue; and the Saviour would not have been able to describe penitence (as He here however does), in *that* aspect which presents it as springing from man's capability and determination :—it would be in that case a penitence which prematurely anticipates the influence of the positive assurance of grace. The returning son almost dares to put his request, but at the same time retracts it: it is impossible for him to anticipate the reception of ver. 20, still less that which follows in ver. 22; this, however, right looked at humanly, is wrong before God. *Make me as one of thy hired servants!* This is by no means, as well-meaning expositors have unthinkingly said, the appropriate *promise or pledge of a new obedience* —as if, in omitting it, ver. 21, "his shame had led him astray, and made him forget, like petitioners too often, the best part of his resolution!" It is an error which accompanies his truth, but such an error as seems justified in the reality of man's circumstances and relations, until the Father's superabounding grace removes its grounds. It is of no avail to urge the observation that ποιεῖν ὡς is used as *tractare* tanquam; the son's ποίησον means more than this, the ὡς used with it has *almost* (if not, in this conflicting sentence, vibrating between hope and fear, between the trust in mercy and the abasement before justice, altogether) the force of—*Make* me a hired servant! (which would be the perfect antithesis to the above quoted precipitate—Make me anew thy son!) On the one hand this might be regarded as the expression of his humility, of the utmost he can think of; for he means to say that even *that* is grace, to be regarded as one of the least of thy hired servants;—"for I am not a reputable stranger who offers himself to thy service, but a vagabond who deserves not the beggar's penny, a worthless son whom the father's rod should meet at the door." But on the other hand he exhibits here in the background the residual ineradicable self-righteousness, the existence of which no reasoning can deny in the vilest sinner, and which cannot be persuaded that its own efforts must not retrieve the past. "And I will show thee, O father, how I thy sometime son will *work* as a servant; will *merit* my morsel of bread (without περισσόν), and it may be in coming years win back my right to the name of son!" It is the same

thing which we have found on another occasion in Matt. xviii. 26. So that *here* lies the concealed transition (in their likeness before God) from the younger to the elder son: in this his most praiseworthy appeal the younger becomes too much like the elder (who had never served but as servant); and if the fulness of grace, which alone suffices, had not taken away this feeling, he might have developed with time into a proud elder son himself! All this is described by our Lord according to the simple truth of that which is in human nature: it is painted, however, by His sacred gentleness in such a manner as to abate without extenuating the great guilt of self-righteous pride, as it is only the full consummation of that delusion which exists in both and in all sons of the Father; to wit, that between father and son a mutual obligation exists—the same delusion with which the *demand* of ver. 12 commenced.

And he arose and came to his father:—this is the best and most blessed "Said and done!" that can be in heaven and upon earth. For, alas, between this *saying* "I should—I might—I will—and again I will," and the actual *doing* of it, there is in the case of many a long standing still, great thoughts of heart (Judg. v. 15, Heb.); and, in the case of too many, room for irresolution and turning back again.[1] Take no counsel with thyself, poor sinner, vacillate not! Come, only come, then wilt thou find in thy Father the thoughts of thy heart, concerning thy being son and being made servant, surpassed beyond all thine imaginings and prayers. He *came*, like the ἐγγίζοντες of ver. 1, and this is the pendant and complement of the being sought and found simply, in ver. 4. He came *to his father!* Most gracious prolepsis of the reception which ensued:—he had rightly said (and more rightly than his final words show him to have understood himself), I will arise and go *to my father!* Oh that every one, in whom there is the germ of this resolution, would put it into instant execution, and become, instead of a *stranger* in the world, a *pilgrim* unto God! (1 Pet. ii. 11.)

Vers. 20–24. He who comes is not cast out, but received with the full joy of his father's heart. And here we have, first, the *taking back again* of the penitent sinner in itself, as the result

[1] "For it is one thing to come *to one's self*, and another to come *to the Father*." (Zeller im Monatsblatt.)

of that love in the omniscient and all-merciful God which comes forth to meet his approach, ver. 20. Then this is more specifically detailed: in the son's confession (without any pledge) ver. 21; in the Father's gracious gifts in the son's justification, full acceptance, and sanctification, being His answer in act to the penitent's appeal, ver. 22; finally, in the joy of the Father's whole household, or heaven, vers. 23, 24. If any one should say: *Such* a gracious and loving reception, so instant and so full, I never experienced, with all my repentance; we have only to reply—Then must the fault have been in thyself, thou hast not with entire determination of purpose arisen; thy repentance must have been lacking in something, else would the same grace have met thee in the way. Compare such sayings of the Old and New Testament as Jer. iii. 12; Jas iv. 8. The *expression* of the grace of God appears here twofold:—coming to meet, and consolation; but the *ground* on which this rests, or the principle from which it springs, is exhibited as combined omniscience and mercy. The ἔτι μακράν[1] reaches very far back, though this could not be clearly introduced in the case of the figurative human father:—not only to the first good resolution of the son, but actually to that first μακράν, ver. 13, which this latter seems to echo. We must push our interpretation beyond the parable, and regard it as being said that the Father had seen the son in all his wanderings and at his utmost distance, having accompanied him everywhere by His unwearied grace. The *seeing* expresses also the *knowing* all about his misery and the full earnestness of his return, so far as that feeling was possible in a miserable sinner—what is lacking in it the Father reckons in that wretchedness over which His *compassion* yearns. It is not impossible that the son might even now, when near his father's house, have remained *afar off*, without any courage to approach it, if his father had not come forth to meet him! The marvellous *seeing* of the Father is a *drawing* too: it excited in this poor son's mind the thought—He sees me, and regards me, as a father! It was as if the atmos-

[1] Instead of which Bahrdt surreptitiously read an οὐκέτι οὐ μακράν: "when he was *no longer far* from the place, his father saw him coming—and when he saw him now *near*, and marked in his pale face," etc. *That* would have been the record, merely as a human narrative, but the exact opposite is the far-reaching scope of the parable.

phere of paternal love already began to compass him about. Had his father kept stern silence when the son drew near to him —what would then have been the consequence? Might he not have been terrified, have gone away again, or been thrown into despair, or what else we may imagine: But he is a merciful, and fatherly father! Although it was only *need* that drove back the runaway, although he is far from coming back with a perfect *filial* trust—with neither of these things does grace upbraid him! The father's heart in the σπλάγχνοις οἰκτιρμοῦ (Col. iii. 12; Lu. i. 78) cries over this son—"He is punished enough, he has punished himself sufficiently, let me run to him and heartily console him!" But this first consolation does not say, or does not yet say, My *son!* (as afterwards, ver. 24); but first there is the embrace between father and child (as in Gen. xlvi. 29, and 2 Sam. xiv. 33), afterwards the words of explanation. This true and loving father—for we may thus extract the pathetic pith of the parable—does not recoil from the swiny reek, does not draw back with dignity from the tattered or naked beggar, and is not restrained by anything from embracing him in the public way! It is altogether as if he had ever been the most loving child, and had never sinned! and therein without any words *all is given* in this first outpouring of grace; there have we the full and ineffable answer to the approaching penitent—I regard thee as my dearest and most faithful son! And thus, what the son would say, is anticipated and prevented. The well-meaning efforts which are made to explain the absence of reference to the mediating *propitiation* of the Son of God, in this instant exhibition of the *Father's mercy*, are altogether needless; they rest fundamentally upon false dogmatic views of this propitiation, as if there were not existing in the Father's being the same love which is expressed in the Son, as if the Father needed abstractly to be propitiated in order to entertain this love! We are not to seek *Christ Himself* as Mediator in the person of this father; nor (though Melancthon has strangely ventured to affirm it), afterwards in the fatted calf, as sacrificially slain. *His* place here is rather to be sought in His thus authoritatively testifying of the Father's mercy. As Nitzsch excellently says: "If He seems to conceal Himself here, He is all the more manifest there, where the Shepherd seeks the lost sheep. For *the*

Son, who is neither an *elder* nor a *younger*, the *eternal* Son of the Father, one with Him, His eye and His heart towards the lost, is come into this world, although invisible and unnamed in the parable, to reveal the Father where He had been ever invisible and where no man knew Him; and He is, to the children of the law and the curse, not only a living herald of the propitiable—we would rather say, of the already propitiated—Father, but the (that is, *our*) propitiation itself, and the way whereby every one of us may come back to God." The mediation of Christ is no more denied by this silence, than the seduction of Satan was denied in the sinner's apostasy at the beginning of the parable. We may also say with von Gerlach, that "the coming out of the father to meet his son here figuratively exhibits the sending of the Son"—and in this coming out to meet him, when fully understood, nothing is said of a "necessary propitiation of His wrath. For *God was* in Christ *reconciling*—2 Cor. v. 19."

The son, received with grace transcending all his thought, fetched home, like an invited guest, through that final portion of the way which would have been so grievous, receives the embrace and the kiss with the profoundest astonishment, his deep reverence forbidding him to refuse them. *Now* knows he, as he never knew before, what a *father* is, and what *such* a father! So much the more piercing becomes the sincere earnestness of his repentance! He does not now begin to think: "Ah, since the good old man takes it so kindly, I might well have spared myself all my anguish and anxiety! Let us avoid for the time to come the folly of plaguing ourselves," etc. Earthly fathers have often alas sons who come back to begin again with more cunning their course of extravagance; man in his sinful estate is indeed capable of apostasy, but to turn *at once* to licentiousness the first full outpouring of grace, would be a satanic element in the midst of the human repentance which involves a direct contradiction. That which the penitent designed, in the trembling resolution of feebly hopeful anxiety, to say to his father, the graciously received son now says in its fullest truth; now first has he experienced a pure repentance and the entire abandonment of himself to nought but grace, and hence his unwise offer of himself to hired service is withheld. This omission of the concluding words of his intended confession, is a feature of the highest significance! Meyer's note

—"The father prevented his continuing," is correct only when it is rightly understood. We are not to suppose that between vers. 21 and 22 there intervened an interruption on the part of the father; and that the son in that father's presence still retained the servant in his heart, and still contemplated "some atonement and reinstatement of his own righteousness;"[1] the father had already, ver. 20, set his *heart* right upon this matter, and so stopped his mouth, that he himself omits the words, as contradictory to his father's kiss of forgiveness.

Thus much for the first scene between father and son; the narrative now concisely hastens with both to the house, where the personages increase around them. The servants of this house, the δοῦλοι, are more than μίσθιοι, as the words of one of them, ver. 27, participating in the Master's sentiments, make plain; we may and we should assuredly think of the angels once more of ver. 10, for they are summoned to sympathetic rejoicing here as well as in vers. 6 and 9. They approve themselves consistently in this interpretation as the doers and ministers of the Divine will. This heavenly Father has in the present case (without disparagement to the independent meaning of that type) *not* merely one blessing, like Isaac, Gen. xxvii. 38, for the faithful son; but the riches of His mercy and of His wisdom providently laid up the second and the best blessing for the son recovered after being lost. "In vers. 22 and 23 every word defines a portion of the plan of salvation and the order of grace." (Richter.) The three gifts which the father causes to be brought to the recovered and accepted son, have received almost universally the same interpretation, which is therefore assuredly the right; they give collectively the second, and perfect answer in deed to the prayer of the son. I still call thee son, thou art and remainest such, thou becomest my son again, thou receivest here all that is wanting to that position:—*behold*, thus make I thee no hired servant, but invest thee before all my servants with thy full honour as my son, and they shall serve thee at my command. In the detail the *robe* brought for the poor naked one corresponds to the primary justification (Isa. lxi. 10; Rev. iii. 18); the *ring* (as token of the eminent man, Jas. ii. 2; Gen. xli. 42; that is of one *free* in

[1] As Stein now rightly interprets!

contradistinction to slaves) indicates with yet fuller acknowledgment, the Spirit of adoption, sonship and freedom;[1] the *shoes* so strikingly introduced at the close (wanting as a rule to slaves) point most significantly to their spiritual interpretation, as meaning the grace and power of a new life and obedience so absolutely needful in order to an entire restoration. "I will provide for it that thou shalt not walk in the new-found paths of my household with the steps of a slave—thou needest not trouble thyself for that!" Yea, the converted son receives *all* at once; under the condition, unexpressed in the first superabounding assurance, that he will now from henceforth sustain these honours aright and fully meet their obligations. As it had been specifically said—*τὴν στολὴν τὴν πρώτην*, that is, the well-known, the best robe of honour;[2] so similarly *τὸν μόσχον τὸν σιτευτόν* (comp. Judg. vi. 25, Sept.), expressly repeated in vers. 27 and 30, that which had been prepared and reserved for a special festivity.[3] By the calf (the significance of which is more than the mere first refreshment of the *hunger-suffering* son, as Roos thinks) we are to understand no other than the heavenly-material substratum, the *expression* of household joy corresponding to such an earthly *δαπάνη, a feast.* With this is connected the most condescendingly communicative invitation to all the servants and dwellers in the house, in strict parallel with vers. 6 and 9,—*εὐφρανθῶμεν.* The Vulg. translates this by epulari, and is not far wrong, since *εὐφραίνεσθαι* had become the usual expression for this, with which not only does ch. xvi. 19 well agree, but parallels also in this chapter, *εὐφρανθῶ* in ver. 29, with the express addition of

[1] Does it signify at the same time as a *seal-ring* (Gen. xxxviii. 18; Esth. iii. 12) the Spirit as the confirming pledge and seal of grace? Scarcely, for the possession of the Spirit already contains this assurance.

[2] Not literally (as the Berlen. Bib. fables to say nothing of its taking the calf to be the old man, the animal, which must die)—the *first* or *former* robe of righteousness which he had thrown away through his sin! If we *need* go any further, we should think of the robe of honour hitherto reserved for the first-born—and this would then be an impressive prolepsis exhibiting the father as already penetrating the heart of the elder son.

[3] "It is as if the calf had been fattened for his coming; he has the best kept for him." Lange.

χαρῆναι in ver. 32. But the great *festal hymn* the father himself intones in the sublime psalm strain of ver. 24. This is the *joy of God* over one of His sinful creatures—the full declaration of that supreme love in the Son's loftiest announcement, following and transcending the indefinite expressions—in heaven, and in the presence of the angels of God! Here are the two former parables condensed into one; for the piece of silver in the dust was as *dead* (as we there rightly interpreted), and the wandering sheep was as *lost*. But this beggar (so scornfully regarded by many a lately hired servant) was no other than a *son* to his father's eye; and to the οὗτος which points him out there is immediately appended the renewed diploma of his prerogative—ὁ υἱός μου—which, spoken at the very outset, would secure the prodigal from any future scorn. But because His supreme grace does not act arbitrarily, and because this Father of the household condescends to make known to His *servants* as His *friends* (ver. 6) the sacred well-grounded *right* (the ὅτι) of His act, that they may *know* and sympathise with the joy of their Lord (Jno. xv. 15)—therefore follows the great word, which, in the record here given by the Highest authority of the history of a penitent sinner, loses the remembrance of his former sin in his present repentance and its reinstating consequences, and makes the grand result to the father of such a son a greater and altogether unmingled joy.[1] "Dead" signifies primarily in the similitude—As my son no better than dead to me his father, being no more with me; and the "lost" which follows is then an epexegetical parallel. But any pious father would in such a case carry his thoughts further; and we must also understand the interpretation of this νεκρός in the full and profound sense which it bears elsewhere in Scripture (Eph. ii. 1, 5). It then places the strongest expression first in this anticlimax—He had ruined and lost *himself*, thrown away his true οὐσία, in that he had *sinned!* But I *forgive*, and reckon that as only having been a sad *loss* of my son. And the latter expression presupposes a truth which modifies the concentrated scriptural truth of the former; viz., that the dead son was, not-

[1] But not to the son that too bold sentiment—O *beata* culpa (quæ talem *meruisti* redemtorem) to which there is nothing analogous in all Scripture.

withstanding, not utterly dead, for he might yet live again!—And they began to be merry:—what an ἤρξαντο is this, after the former ἤρξατο ὑστερεῖσθαι, including this lost son in the joy! With a heart how full of the highest joy springing out of his deepest abasement, does the son now sit in his place of honour as king of the feast in his father's presence!

Vers. 25–28. The third narrative might here have ended with the same conclusion as the two former: but it had promised in the commencing words, ver. 11, something more; and the other of the two sons must now come forward. The Pharisees had said at ver. 7, at least in their hearts,—"these ninety and nine just persons are *ourselves*, however!" And again, while hearing of the lost son—"this does *not* assuredly point to us!" Another mirror is now held up before them—"But here see yourselves!" Apart indeed from any such design, the continuation of the second part is the fit supplement to the narrative of the converted sinner; showing "the reception which the retrieved soul meets with from his fellow-men" in contrast with his reception by the Father; and further, how that gracious Father vindicates *His son* from their scorn. So far this second part tells those publicans and sinners—Expect nothing else as the result of your conversion; but let your consolation be the love of God, which will be confirmed to you despite all their murmurings! But we still think that, in the scope and cast of the entire parable, our Lord's main design is to make prominent the intreaty as addressed to these proud righteous ones, who as worse sinners are also *sought* if possible with still greater love. This second word of grace to the secretly and perversely apostate sinners who enviously clamour against his righteousness, is addressed to them as an invitation to repentance, or, since as a rule this result is not to be expected, as a most earnest *warning* to such as despise it. We behold once more in the clearest light of the truth which the Pharisees perverted, the *sin* of man (now *theirs!*) and the *grace* of God as rigidly contrasted. The *sin* of the elder son *before the father* (as ver. 18), although hypocritically concealed, suddenly betrays itself, and more than that, assumes its highest manifestation in his anger at his brother's reception. His first inquiry, vers. 25, 26, is most unseasonably *unfilial*, and the simple correct reply in a clear statement of the circumstances

of the case, ver. 27, only provokes his naughty wrath! Then does the father's grace bear long-sufferingly with the outbreaking *pride* of this sinner too (such as made him, in the worst sense, like the foolish sheep), and seeks to overcome him by love. Mark the *anticipating* and condescending love which in this case is once more shown (ver. 28); and the pride of the son, which is now by this provoked to the uttermost, putting into his mouth complaints of the neglect shown to himself (ver. 29), and of the favour which his brother had received (ver. 30). Mark, finally, the father's answer, which places all in its last and clearest light, and gives the *final lesson*, by which the father *seeks* to convince and win even him (and Jesus the Pharisees)—however certain that he will fail!

The elder son was *in the field*:—does this mean that he was among the servants diligently at work, as his δουλεύω, ver. 29, proclaims? It was possibly so intended, possibly only (certainly also) as Nitzsch interprets—those supercilious righteous ones "are not themselves personally at hand when the lost sinner is recovered." Assuredly there is lightly hinted a distance from the father's house and the father's face; in which the labourer (or stroller!), in this ἀγρός of his father, is in danger of furnishing a parallel with that other ἐν τοῖς ἀγροῖς of the far country. "Now his *elder* son:"—this new starting-point of the narrative connects itself immediately with ver. 22, "*the father*"—just as this ὁ πατήρ again referred back to the beginning, ver. 11. The *father* of these *two* sons, the father of the one as well as of the other—that is an immovable principle lying at the base of the whole history. Yet must we observe, again, the commencing *contrast* of the elder son with the οὗτος ὁ υἱός μου, ver. 24, in which lies concealed the father's grievous trouble about *that* son, over whom he could not so rejoice. It is only because such is the state of his mind, and the father well knows it, that the elder son is not asked, not simply to his father's councils—that might have been too much—but not even to an expression of sympathy before the εὐφραίνεσθαι proceeds. There would have been no interchange of sympathy, but a wicked reception of the prodigal which his father would spare him. If that elder son had been differently minded, the idea of sympathy would have been more appropriate in connection with him than with the

servants in a less near relation; but—he is away in the field, and there the father leaves him in his isolation and selfishness! At the punctual mealtime he comes back to the house, but hears on this occasion something unusual—music and dancing (or dance-music), for thus without the article as appended by Luther must we interpret it.[1] He curiously inquires what it is. "This is a very strange incident with us, and something special must be proceeding! How is it that I know nothing about it? Ah, had this feast been given *to me*—but to whom else, then, can it have been given?" His vexation because such things go on in the house without him, is the reason why he does not go in and naturally gather the reason for himself; remaining without as an uninvited guest, and summoning imperiously a servant to explain it to him, instead of going at once to his father, the only head of the house. There is no ground whatever for detecting in the servant's reply an evil design;[2] it is rather in perfect accordance with the father's words, standing between his former and latter declaration, vers. 24 and 32. Nor can we imagine how Lange could discern an invidious spirit in this simple narration of fact, which twice gives the reason with ὅτι (as ver. 24 commenced) for the festal merriment; or describe it as a "faulty and superficial report which would foster the elder brother's unhappy humour." *Thy brother* cannot mean—The runaway and reprobate, thou knowest who, is come back again in full state, and so

[1] A note for the Pietists! The Lord speaks just as He had often seen and heard in the dwellings of Galilee; and in adopting this image of joy He does not absolutely condemn festal music as the expression of man's pleasure. He does not make it sin in itself, though its concomitants and ends too often make it such (Ex. xxxii. 18). That *gladness* which God gives the Gentiles (Acts xiv. 17), and to the natural man who knows of no better, is a pure type of a higher joy. The landlord who utterly abolished (relata refero) all light music from his village, would prevent the young people from understanding this parable.

[2] Berlenb. Bib.: "This is the devil's craft to send in a man's way such as will pour the right oil upon the fire, and stir up envy and all passions. This is the effect of all such oblique relations, and hence the servant shares in the guilt of the elder son." Most assuredly incorrect, and not so striking in its error as the plain remark made before —"He may have often heard music before, but this heavenly music makes the bear growl!"

forth. No, the solemn reinstatement into his filial place and prerogative from the father's own lips has taught this servant how he should speak; and hence to the elder son he says—Thy brother. "He *is come—how* he came is not the question now, that is over, it is joy enough that he is here at all. Thus thinks *thy* father and *his*, thus does he greet this thy brother, joyful that he is yet *alive!* (which ὑγιαίνων here indicates—happily and nothing amiss, being alive after all; the servant has no reference to soundness of soul, and his expressions are more common and less comprehensively profound than the father's). Therefore thy father hath caused the fatted calf to be killed (this, again, to the servant's mind is a sufficient notification for the whole feast)—is not that as it should be, for is not the matter one of great joy to all of us in common with our good old master? Or is thy mind as the elder not at one with *thy brother* and *thy father* in this matter?" Thus does the servant himself seem to propitiate the bad feeling which the harsh question of his young master had manifested—whose temper and spirit he may have had many opportunities of witnessing in his dealing with the servants in his father's absence. Out of a servant's mouth this blinded son must first hear his reproof, before his gracious father administers it; to this servant, as to any *stranger* who might ask what was going on, the simple truth that here was indeed an ἔδει χαρῆναι, needed no confirmation or proof. But the brother and son, made blind and unfeeling by pride, is only made wrathful by it, and refuses to go in and occupy his own reserved seat:—and *this* remaining without exhibits yet more strongly the likeness between him and his once wandering brother.

Vers. 28–30. The essential and wicked *anger* of selfishness and hatred only exists among us; in God our heavenly Father there is only the principle of sunlike love, which (as Zinzendorff says) shines all the more brightly and cheeringly upon the most miserable and unworthy of its creatures and children—until this very love *must* become to the wilfully obdurate the fire of Divine wrath. The father comes out, interrupting his great joy over the one son for the sake of the other, and just as he had before gone forth to meet the lost one: he does not neglect the misapprehension of the one son while holding fast the other—both deeply concern his soul—*both* are his *sons!* (Hence here, as in ver. 20,

—*his father.)* The benignant father *goes out*, because the proud son will not *go in;* the father intreats the murmuring son, by exhortation and gracious persuasion (see ver. 31, τέκνον) :—by Divine grace there may be *human* examples of this, though rare, ordinarily no man as a father would do *this*. But thus does the heavenly Father act, He thus acted at this very time through the gracious preaching of the Son,[1] through this parable which fell from His lips! And when thou standest in the place of God as His preacher and ambassador, thou must "know how to apply thyself strenuously to *intreaty* with men of all kinds, until they come to feel the things of grace"[2]—and more than that, with men who never come to that feeling!

But what of the son who was so overpoweringly solicited of his father? His anger is the more incensed, and breaks through all the bounds of past restraint in his father's presence. Or was this not the first time that he thus wickedly presumed, must other similar scenes be presupposed as having been wont to occur? We think that, conformably with the spirit of the parable, this was a sudden throwing off of the hypocritical mask, occasioned by this circumstance, and his own anger thereon. Suffice that this son (emboldened by his father's intreaty —what hardness of heart!) expostulates with his father as a servant with a master, to say the least; indeed, he reckons like a hired servant, and yet rebukes like that servant's master. We see plainly at once that in his father's house he has utterly lost the filial feeling, even as his brother far away had retained some measure of it:—he therefore is, so to speak, the real and more entirely *lost* son. His father had doubtless called him τέκνον at the beginning as he now does at the close; but he does not answer with πάτερ; that word is not uttered before his wrathful and complaining—ἰδοὺ—*see* what great injustice thou hast inflicted on me! Nitzsch refers to the apparently reasonable complaint which the mere reason of the elder son would urge (let us recall the words of the Kantian in a former page); and he does this in harmony with the Spirit of Christ, through whose voice the heavenly Father would graciously per-

[1] See Vol. iii., on Matt. xxi. 37 seq.

[2] Richter's Hausbibel on this passage.

suade the erring sinner; but the severe truth is soon revealed by the proud son's own words, who reveals and condemns himself, without needing any further testimony. *I serve thee!* There stands disclosed the perfect Pharisee, the slave concealed in the son betrays himself in this unfilial, because upbraiding δουλεύω; the slave who through τοσαῦτα ἔτη has plagued himself with what wearisome and harsh service! Not—As I alas have been obliged; but as if it had been an opus supererogationis which merited a special reward. "I have remained, although the firstborn, and of adult age, under thy paternal control; and have served thee diligently and usefully as thy overservant in thy house (ordered and driven thy idle servants, and so forth). Could I not have demanded my emancipation like this pure brother; and wouldst thou not have been obliged to give me mine inheritance? Even now thus late am I still diligently employed without in thy service—*see* that I am so!" A *son*, who can speak in this slavish style, instead of entering into his father's commandment of love—Give me, my son, thy *heart!* is on that very account worse than any μίσθιος serving for bread:—but we are all the two *sons* of God, the one kind as well as the other. "Neither transgressed I at any time (in so many years!) *any one commandment* of thine:"—here does the Pharisee still more strikingly appear in the mirror which he himself unconsciously holds up![1] Not, as Luther gives it—*Thy commandment* generally; this is very different: this righteous one only knows the multitude of *individual* ἐντολαί, which he here upbraidingly refers to; and before performing any of them it was first necessary that it should be expressly imposed upon him as a duty. In any case in which his father did not positively give his *command*, there was nothing in the son's heart which would prompt him to go beyond the δουλεύειν. "I have not by one false step transgressed, or pretermitted:"—thus does his blind and rash self-condemnation run on at the very moment when he is giving proof that the one ἐντολή for sons is utterly disregarded by him, when he is at once transgressing the two laws—Thou shalt honour thy father, Thou shalt love thy brother! "I have not *at any time* transgressed

[1] We are very doubtful whether a Pharisee of a *better sort*, as Neander says. The common evil belonging to the character of all, even the best, is disclosed, and exhibited in its internal principle.

one of thy commandments: thou hast never *at any time* given me a little joy:"—was not this a fearful sound, as if the father was a sinner and a debtor standing before his son and lord with a long and evil reckoning against him? Now are we pushing the interpretation too far; all is thus literally as we read it. If the Lord were disposed for a good reason, and in the most patient benignity, to admit a good sense in this boasting (God's service without transgression from youth up), *it would be of no avail;* for these holy ones themselves poison all by their murmuring against poor sinners, who receive mercy, and the God who shows it, by their *envy* and their *pride*, which convert all their pretensions into crimes, and betray the evil heart which pervades all their apparent good works. But he must describe and paint them *as they are.* And He does no more than this; the blindest of these blind could not complain and say—This picture does us no justice! What then was wrong in it to them? That the others are *received!* *Wherefore* then not? Because *their own* glory, prerogative and preeminence are detracted from thereby! And what does this show? That their whole excellence and righteousness rests upon no actual foundation of truth (else would the increase of the number of the saints be joy to them as it is to God); that their sole glorying over others, is their condemnation! "They would have a Heathenism side by side with their holy Judaism, that so their innate hereditary sanctity might shine all the more brightly by contrast"—or there must be reprobate and rejected sinners, that so the righteous ones might *appear* all the more conspicuously righteous! "Thus are they essentially untrue; thus they lie in the very face of the law, the fulfilment of which is love; they deny the God of grace, both by their own self-justification, and by the condemnation of their brethren; and unconsciously enter into a league with unconverted sinners against him who repents!" And why is all this, and whither does it lead? They believe in no conversion, because they themselves have never experienced it; they mock and traduce the gracious joys of the pardoned sinner, because they, by their own fault and incapacity, have never tasted and felt it themselves.

"Thou never *gavest* anything *to me*," might seem to mean but yet cannot—"And I was contented to have it so, willingly continued my unpaid service!" For this present upbraiding *re-*

proach throws a dark shade over all his lustrous virtue. This word, spoken by the elder, entirely corresponds to the "give me!" of the younger son: in both cases the regard is fixed upon the bestowment of good things alone, instead of upon the father's favour, love, and fellowship. This brother, then, is first of all like the former prodigal; but inasmuch as he has restrained himself, concealed his secret spirit, and played the hypocrite for the sake of the whole inheritance, he is much worse than he; this systematic hypocrisy has so hardened and blinded him that he now retrospectively complains against his father as it regards the distribution, which the other had only made matter of request. "Thou never *gavest*"—ah, had he but come as a son and in a becoming matter to ask anything his father had! What gave he not? "Not a single kid, that I might *make merry with my friends:*" —does not this make the case worse and worse? Thus the serving his father and being with his father had been no joy to him; all that he had done was a harsh constrained villenage, and the reward which he had lusted for was to enjoy himself in some permitted by-pleasures (inexpressible perverseness!) without his father. Of the joy of forgiveness, such as converted sinners know, he knows nothing; nor any more of the pleasure of keeping the commandments from the spontaneous impulse of love. (Ps. xix. 12.) And who are the *friends*, whose society he relishes apart from his father? The same love of sinful pleasure which drove his brother into outward excesses, gave him this suspicious love of *independent merriment*, and made him feel the want of his forbidden commerce with his proper comrades. These "friends" are opposed to the "harlots" whom he afterwards assigns to his brother; but, under a more decorous name, are no better than they.

And now comes the positive injustice of the father in receiving his brother in addition to the negative injustice towards himself —expressed in bitter contrasts! "So many years do I serve in vain"—but *now* great gifts are ready for him *who has come*. "And who is *this*"—the proudest scorn betrays itself in this finger-pointing, in such unconscious contrast with the sublime word of the father, in ver 24—"and what is he, in comparison of myself? Thou mayest acknowledge him as *thy son;* but I will take care never to say of such an unclean one—*my brother*. He is *come*.

indeed—but *how?* Constrained by distress, because he has transformed himself into a miserable beggar." (It is not—is *come back*, returned again; he has no idea or feeling *of that!*) He will not even recognise the legitimate distribution of ver. 12 (which had then greatly vexed him), but now retrospectively protests against it. Σοῦ τὸν βίον (the right reading), is an ironical continuation of ὁ υἱός σου—though the narrative admitted that he wasted *his own* substance. This is the same harsh, and still more harshly pressed, position of *right* which had been assumed in the younger brother's demand; not now, however, laid claim to for himself, but turned against his brother and his father:—"*Thou* foolish father, didst then give up *thy* goods to be wasted! He hath devoured it *with harlots*" (Prov. xxix. 3; Ecclus. ix. 6)—intensifying the ζῇν ἀσώτως in his own affectionate and brotherly gratuitous assumption. How came he to know that so well? The servant had not told him so, but his own heart tells him what he would have done in his brother's place. "And for *him* thou hast at once killed the fatted calf, while I never had a little kid which I might slay:—thus thou hast not merely made him *equal with me* (Matt. xx. 12), though that would of itself be against all justice, but thou hast *preferred* him before me! He is the dear child, and I the neglected and forgotten one; even as now all things are going on without me." Indeed, the wretched returning one should not have turned to his father without his earnest brother's intercession; and the father should not have admitted him without permission of the son and younger master in the house! What would, what will indeed this noble brother say, when he sees the robe of honour and all its other appurtenances? He *seemed* to be for so many years a true and diligent son—but what a *brother* is he now; consequently what a *son* before the Father of that brother! *In this it is made manifest* (1 Jno. iii. 10), that is, by the lack of brotherly love, that in him there is also no love of God. His conduct ought to have been very different, if not for his brother's yet for his *father's* sake, whose kindness due respect should have taught him not to malign, and whose joy it should have been his joy as a son not to disturb but to increase by sympathy. Could we suppose him capable of pushing his hypocrisy yet further, and of embracing his brother with a simulated pleasure for the sake of appearances

before the father of both? *Thus far* we are not to suppose human nature even in the Pharisee character to go; any more than we could suppose, a few verses back, the once profligate sinner able at once to turn to licentiousness the grace which had just redeemed him from the profoundest misery.

Vers. 31, 32. The Pharisee, in disclosing, has condemned himself; nevertheless the *father*, in the similitude, whose closing words coincide with the reality of the true Father's words in Christ, does not yet judge his petulant son, but goes on in gracious exhortation to teach and humble him, if peradventure he might yet be accessible to instruction! Thus does the Father, and He alone, interpose in the great and permanent quarrel between His two sons throughout all the world; yet *we* also, as His servants and ambassadors, should learn of Him those words of patient love, should know from His example how in meekness to instruct those that oppose themselves. (2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.) The words of the father are uttered in the gentleness of perfect truth:—"As it regards *thee*, my son, all that I have is, as it ever has been, in my fatherly kindness made common to thee, despite that most unchildlike selfish habitual disguisement of feeling which I have long known, and thou hast now avowed. But as it regards *this thy brother* (such he is and must be, for he is my son, the justifying οὗτος of my love prevails against the contemptuous οὗτος which thou hast let fall), *it was meet* on most incontrovertible grounds of holy right that all in my house should rejoice over him; it *shall* be so therefore, and if it please thee not, go without once more and remain without, for only as his brother canst thou continue my son." (And thus the parable as a great whole returns conclusively into its commencement with the *two sons*). The affectionate τέκνον at the outset is not merely the expression of a yet remaining paternal love, moved by his son's foolish words to complaint and supplication, even as an earthly father, half angry and half grieved, might cry—*Child*, what have I to endure from thee, how canst thou dare to speak to thy father thus! But with our Father, all anthropopathical tenderness of love must be regarded as one with the supreme dignity of righteous truth; hence the final and conclusive reply here given combines *strict instruction* with all its moving, awakening and humbling appeal. Let this be carefully

noted, then, in this first mild *τέκνον*, which responds to the haughty *ἰδού* of the son. He did not say *father*, and yet is called in tender rebuke *son:* that is, speaking to the depths of his heart:—"Speakest thou now as son? Think, O my son, *come to thyself!* Hast thou served Me as a son through all these years?" Then follow piercing and convincing contrasts with the spirit and words of his unfilial allegation of such service. "*Thou*, set aside as thou thinkest, sittest nevertheless in thy prerogative of birthright; and hast enjoyed through my long-suffering the constant recognition of thy supposed fidelity. Πάντοτε—in opposition to thy *οὐδέποτε*—art thou *with me!* and I am thy father; hast thou ever been other than a son, was not and is not that more than any of the *gifts* which thou hast found wanting? Am I not better to thee than ten friends, and a hundred kids? Wherefore hast thou coveted merriment apart from me? Are *thy friends* nearer to thy heart than thy father? Or seekest thou my goods instead of my grace, mine and not me—now *all* that is mine is thine! What have thy services had to do with this? Why shouldst thou speak of a *kid*, if this be so? (Is that instead of the *husks* to thee?)"

But here arises the much contested question of the expositors:—how could this most incomprehensible *πάντα τὰ ἐμὰ σά ἐστιν* be applied in good earnest to *this* hypocrite? However much contested, nothing is more true, in every respect, than this word. The first full meaning which presents itself is this:—all is *thy ἐπιβάλλον*, is due to thee as an inheritance! In this word, as in the *τέκνον* before, the pure truth would assume to his evil conscience a tone of keen and reproachful irony. This son *was* still his father's child through his father's longsuffering, and yet was no longer such in his own heart; his being called so, though unworthy, is a token of all the richer grace. Just so all the paternal goods were his, and yet were *not* his. "Thou servest me in thy sordidness of spirit for the sake of *all that is mine*—and I have not hitherto disinherited thee!" Thus, secondly, and in direct earnestness:—"Even now all is and shall be actually thine, if thou amendest thy thought and becomest my child in the best sense, responding to my waiting patience. Have not *all things always* been open and free to thy desire; couldst

thou not, wert thou not permitted to *ask me for* any good gift?" This exhibits the fatherly longsuffering as not yet exhausted; this dissembler is still tolerated in the house, and his right to everything not yet finally withdrawn. But at the same time the τὰ ἐμά which precedes this, and which, as long as the father lives, holds good, impresses the great truth—There is nothing for thee but the *gift* of my paternal hand and favour, nothing to be yielded at thy demand.[1] *Finally*—though this is unspoken, left to the inference of his own conscience, as it is the evil which he himself provokes—finally, there impends over the wilful sinner the danger of being disinherited and cast out, in contrast with the voluntary departure of the other who was at least honest in his sin. For this Father *dies not.* The rebel, secret or open, against the supreme will of God's love waits in vain till the Ancient of days (whose existence He must feel while essaying to deny it), till the great Creator of all spirits, but especially of the spirits of Adam's race, shall decease, and give license to the mad heirs of all His universal possessions. At the utmost distance from Him, as in His immediate presence; in the depths of the abyss, where devils murmur, as in the heavenly home where all rejoice with God and His angels over grace—everywhere and for ever all creaturely existence abideth in His hand and power; nor can any with impunity invade His supreme prerogative!

But thou *shouldst* be kindly and merry—such is Luther's inadequate version of the text; for the father does not expressly utter any complaint or command, he does not retort the upbraiding which *he* had a thousandfold reason for; all *that* is latently addressed to his son's conscience. He does not say anything further to qualify the unretracted acknowledgment of ver. 31. Only in the ὁ ἀδελφός σου there is a slight tone of reproachful appeal—"Thou shouldst have been glad concerning him in common with myself!"[2] But, properly speaking, the simple and

[1] Thus containing an oblique denunciation of envy at a brother's good, as Calvin expresses it:—Nulla est irascendi causa primogenito, dum *absque suo damno* fratrem humaniter accipi videt. Nothing is taken away from thee, nothing given to him but the calf of the feast, and the *joy!*

[2] To this points the striking observation of Nitzsch to these murmurers: "What dost thou lose, if there be more joy communicated than that which is in thee? Might it not tend to the furtherance of thine own?

elevated ἔδει,—*it was meet*, thus was it right in this house—while it overturns all opposition, contains, as it were, a justification (from the father before his son!)—an *apology for what had transpired*, as the εὐφρανθῆναι placed first seems to indicate.[1] Ver. 32 replies to the complaint of ver. 30, as ver. 31 to that of ver. 29. The great festal hymn of rejoicing—ὅτι οὗτος νεκρὸς ἦν κ.τ.λ. sounds out once more undisturbed; the brother ought to and must *hear* it at least from the father's own mouth, in a richer and purer strain than from that of the servant. The glorious ἔδει of His incontrovertible ὅτι reaches to the depths of the rectitude of Divine mercy and love, having just based itself upon the convincing illustration of the human parable. It is, as it were, that first question repeated—What *man* is there among you, who as a *father* would not do the same over a lost and recovered son? This, therefore, is the conclusive word to the Pharisees:—"That which ye blame in Me, is the love, the paternal love of God; that which *the Father doeth*, that doeth also *the Son*, as the good Shepherd before your eyes; that will the Spirit do in His church when He is gone home—even as ye should have done it among the people and in the house of God."

A sound exposition thus sets at rest the concluding question, with which only a perverted expositor would *set out—Who is this elder son?* Every man who is what he was! First of all, the Pharisees of that time in contradistinction from the penitent and retrieved publicans and sinners of Israel. Then, according to the never-failing wider outlook, the self-righteous and proud Jews in contrast with the Gentiles received into the kingdom of God—Rom. ix. 4, 5, being the explanation of the father's word in ver. 31. And is there any application beyond? If we only hold fast the fundamental ideas, we can make applications enough for ourselves of a more restricted historical bearing (as Keil does, contrasting the Jews with the *Samaritans*)—or taking into account the circumstances of our own time (as Petersen, *e.g.*, sees Roman Catholicism and Protestantism in the two sons, Lehre von der Kirche ii. 244). There is a most marvellous conceit which founds upon the

[1] The Peschito expresses it: וְלָא הוּא לָן for *us*.

mystery of this parable, the notion of an elder son in heaven, who thus satanically murmurs at the restoration of the human race as exhibited in the younger son's history! But should it not be—*once* murmured, since Satan fell before Adam, and cannot murmur there again?[1] That the sons of God, apart from Adam's race, *might* seize upon a certain principle of right in their complaint, if *their* reason were as ours, we have admitted above; but they are more rational than we. The *holy* angels (whose holiness is not "righteousness" essentially before God, and they are not the just persons who need no repentance), the servants of the great Lord in His many mansions, who reckon as His friends and neighbours, murmur not, but rejoice over His grace to sinners:—and the Lord Himself thus obviated by His own introductory words every such idle supposition. But instead of these we may, if still seeking further the elder son, think of *Christians* who pride themselves on a Judaic right;—and, indeed, we must so apply the record, for it is not a history adapted to that time only, but spoken to *us all*.[2] When we preach to the called but not chosen, who still retain their pride and self-righteousness, we may hold up to them the mirror of vers. 29–31, to give them the knowledge of these three fearful truths:—that we may think ourselves to be keeping all the commandments of God, while keeping in our hearts the principle of all transgression; that we may boast of our own righteousness, while committing in the very boast the heaviest sins; that we may live among all the gifts of grace in their actual offer and seeming possession—and yet not possess or receive them at all!

Finally—we have not *yet* reached the end—let no man forget himself and the probable Pharisee still extant in his own heart, while preaching thus to others; nor forget the labourers

[1] Or will there be a general restoration of the human race, and then a new fall of Satan, stumbling over that stumbling-block? Those who advocate the simple and pure recovery of men and devils are wiser than that. We marvel that Theremin, in a sermon otherwise so beautiful, should graze the borders of a doctrine which involves such consequences. (Predigten, iii. Band, 1823. Nr. 9.)

[2] It will be perfectly *reversed* in the last days, when corrupt Christendom will be the elder son, and converted Israel the younger!

in the vineyard. Here we may mention the touching incident (now first printed) connected with the eccentric but most devout and genuine Daniel Krummacher in Elberfeld. Being once asked in an assembly of his brethren, discussing this question, who was, in his view, the elder son, he solemnly said—I well know now, for I learned it yesterday! Being asked further, he laconically said—*Myself!* and then confessed that yesterday it had fretted his heart to find that a very ill-conditioned person had suddenly been enriched with a remarkable visitation of grace. So deep is our corruption; so long, even in the younger son after all his experience of grace, does that evil principle which prompted him to offer himself to hired service, adhere to his soul and reappear in the similitude at least of the elder brother. It is easily stated and laid down in the theory, but hardly reduced to actual practice and established in full experience:—"The *childlike*, *believing* men may apply their tests to the reprobate returned; may, especially if they have never sinned in like manner and to such a degree, stand mute in thankful astonishment that God has done so great a thing to him; but they cannot *count it strange* that such should desire to go on with them to the same higher, blessed, and acceptable life; *offended* they cannot be." (Nitzsch.) Take heed, therefore, ye servants in God's house; let the figure of the elder son administer to you often a wholesome fear! *Such* people must, however, remain without; for even if the all-merciful God would construct a special heaven for them and "their friends" (when satiated with the longed-for kid, the swine which no stern Moses should any longer forbid, instead of their husks, they might enjoy themselves)—whence could their blessedness, which makes it heaven, come, without the filial and pure adoration of eternal love and grace? *Their* εὐφραίνεσθαι *must* instantly, at the very threshold of eternity, be exchanged for a miserable ὑστερεῖσθαι!

The parable breaks off, the admonished son no further replies to his father, and his conversion is not announced. So in the great fulfilment of the parable it is also wanting in actual life; if thou wouldst be an exception, and remain always with thy Father, enjoying and retaining all that is His—then *come* first to Him in the deepest penitence, and pray, "Father, I was called but was not thy son, I have been much less deserving of

the name than my brother—*make Thou me* from a shameful hired servant an honourable child—make me in Thy highest grace *what my brother is!*"

THE CONVERTED SINNER'S PRUDENCE IN ESCAPING FROM PUNISHMENT WHICH YET THREATENS EVEN HIM;—THE UNJUST STEWARD, TRUE FIDELITY IN THE USE OF WORLDLY GOODS.

(Luke xvi. 1–13.)

It cannot be expected from us to unravel the fearfully tangled perplexities of the comments which, from the most ancient times down to our own day, with theological or untheological craftiness, with more or less of arrogance, on the one hand, pretending to extract its only true meaning, or, on the other, with the limitation of ability giving it up altogether, have darkened and perplexed and confused this parable of our Lord, in itself and in its fundamental theme so plain. We shall not be expected to do any more than give positive reasons for our own understanding of the subject, with merely an explanatory reference to such *misunderstandings* as have a foundation of truth in them, and therefore cannot be classed among the ridiculous theories of crackbrained men.[1] We can regard only those systems of exposition as having any claim to our attention, which are really in earnest in endeavouring to discover the true meaning of our Lord; and we must particularly bear with those which are not led astray by mere superficiality and incapacity to understand exegesis at all, but by an excusable lack of right perception where a false application on the one side or the other is so easily made.

Our exposition can do no more than confirm the traditional *predominant interpretation* of the church, the rejection of which by so many expositors may be somewhat excused, partly from the

[1] In which last class we must reckon that of a certain expositor (whose name we would rather not mention, after the description in the text) who refers the parable to Judas Iscariot—while another is not wanting, who discovers in it Pontius Pilate!

fact that ecclesiastical tradition does not always stand its ground before maturer knowledge even in the domain of exegetics, and partly, by the lack of any exhibition of the fundamental connection of thought, which for the most part pervades the interpretations handed down by antiquity. The grand and profound, though subtle, *connection* which subsists between chaps. xv. and xvi. has either been altogether denied (thus closing the door beforehand against a right apprehension), or the right connection has not been discerned—we cannot avoid saying, because it has not been sought with sufficient simplicity of mind. *The sinner's repentance or punishment!* Such is our simple acceptation of the theme of the two chapters, as they set before us the prodigal son and the rich man in opposition at the beginning and end. And the meaning of that which lies between must naturally be sought between those two points, and will be—The *prudence* (ver. 8) of the sinner, absolved from the first great punishment, converted and received into favour, in avoiding the *ruin* which may yet impend; his wisdom, as being not dismissed and rejected but reinstated, in dealing as a *faithful* steward in the affairs of his own salvation. That the discourse treats specifically of the administration of *worldly goods*, the possessions already acquired even as a mammon of unrighteousness, is simply to be explained by the condition and circumstances of the *Publicans*, with whom the Lord has especially to do, in contradistinction to the Pharisees. But the connection of the previous chapter with the present does not consist in this, that in the former faith in the mercy of God, and in the latter the *love of our neighbour*,[1] is treated of; the former teaching what the Father doeth for us, and the latter what we should do to our neighbour; but that *prudence* which, by the gracious permission of God, uses even the ἐλάχιστον, ἀλλότριον, ἄδικον as the materials for the exhibition of *fidelity*, in order to lay up in eternity the reward of grace—that and nothing else is, according to the plain words of vers. 8–12, the fundamental precept of the parable. How Neander can make

[1] According to v. Gerlach, we have in chap. xvi. compassion towards men, active charity, that love of our neighbour which necessarily results from the love of God. According to Lange—Imparting love, as the first fundamental characteristic of a developing salvation. But the giving or not giving is certainly not the leading idea in either parable!

the theme the "blending of *simplicity* and prudence" we cannot discover.

But the *unjust* steward! Can his unjust and overreaching craft be a pattern for us? Here rises the second reason which has prompted men to adopt other methods of explaining the parable—the excusable, and in itself laudable objection to the assumption that the children of the world are represented as putting to shame the children of light, which, however, stands *disertis verbis* in ver. 8. A parable can assuredly never design to inculcate its opposite—it was scarcely necessary for D. Schulz to demonstrate this so argumentatively and to assert it so earnestly. But as certainly as the Lord does not (according to Julian's presumptuous mockery) place the unrighteousness of this steward before us as a pattern, so certainly does He exhibit for our example his prudence as such, apart from his injustice—and this is not the opposite of the parable! It seems so obvious to every unprejudiced mind that (as Heubner says), "much profit may be derived from the most wicked examples, they may often be directly translated from evil to good," and Luther's good sense has enriched this parable with so many pertinent examples of this, that all these useless objections should have long ago been laid aside.[1] Moreover, it is admitted that the Lord Jesus has elsewhere given us parables analogous, which no exegesis can explain away. He compares the freely-giving Father in heaven, ever ready to hear, with the friend who, not for friendship's sake, but only because of shameless importunity, giveth his friend what he asked; and even with the *unjust* judge, who at last concedes the poor widow's claim only for his own comfort's sake, and simply to get rid of her:—now those instances are much stronger than this, which merely teaches us poor sinners to learn of a thrifty and prudent worldling, and exhorts us as children of light to practise prudence in a good cause, and to be at least as sagacious in prosecuting our religious advantage as the children of the world are in seeking their earthly good. To the πόσῳ μᾶλλον of the former instance the κἀγὼ ὑμῖν λέγω of this parable

[1] It is not, as Weisse thinks, an "*oblique* parable which does no honour to Christ's wisdom as a Teacher—a style of instruction which would not be tolerated in a village schoolmaster!" Alas, these lowminded, little masters; would they but read and learn themselves!

perfectly corresponds; and not only so, this express explanation of the Lord gives a further ground for the adjusting of all difficulties, inasmuch as in the application of the parable He takes that very thing which constituted the iniquity of the steward's prudence, and makes it an essential duty of all God's stewards; —that which was infamous fraud in him becomes to Christ's *stewards* the distribution of God's possessions in the name of the *All-Holy* Proprietor of them all. Thus both the unity and the contrast between the parable and its interpretation are precisely preserved. It is sufficiently plain, as C. H. Rieger observes, that this doctrine of our Lord "was not addressed to people of the world, who are always inclined to put a base and shameless construction upon His requirements; but for disciples who had already attained to the gracious beginning of good desires, who had received the assurance of joy in heaven over their penitence upon earth, and having opened their hearts to this gracious truth, were now disposed to disburden themselves of earthly joys and cares, and to lay up their treasure in heavenly habitations."

Consequently that "certain uneasy feeling," of which Pastor Brauns (Stud. u. Krit. 1842–4) admits that his mind was conscious, preventing his yielding to the common and correct interpretation, and which he too boldly attributes to the church generally, has no foundation, and is such a fastidious nicety as the heavenly accommodation in those other parables of the Friend and the Judge should have altogether dispelled. The same Brauns makes the Pharisees come forward and object—"Thou preachest a strange morality; such arch-knavery to be viewed as thoughtful provision for the future, is too crude, and will tend rather to help out the Publicans' case, than to edify their souls" —and we think that their ἐκμυκτηρίζειν may very well suggest that such thoughts were in their evil hearts, but that they never had the courage to utter such base thoughts aloud. It will be the endeavour of our exposition to show the baselessness of all such imaginations.

The critical Schleiermacher is not disturbed by any such fine moral perception, but understands here an actual counsel given to the Publicans to appropriate the mammon of *the Roman Power* to the utmost possible advantage of the Jewish people; led to this opposite extreme by the dogmatic bluntness of feeling which

—in accordance with the fundamental deficiency of all his theology and exegesis—induced him to look for the everlasting habitations in the temporal kingdom of the Messiah. "Ye good Publicans, favour as much as ye can the people as against their capricious and despotic masters, in those matters which ye have in your own province; that so they also may favour you when a new state of things arises!" The relation of the Publicans being somewhat unlimited and undefined, as is generally the case with indirect imposts which were farmed, Christ did not charge them to do anything actually unjust, but only to exercise their discretionary latitude of power to the best advantage for the Jewish people. "If ye thus wisely and prudently manage your matters, ye will not be cast out of Israel, when the kingdom of Messiah is introduced." Alas, how *political* is this—and therefore how far from the meaning of our Lord, who is speaking here to these sinners of a very different continuance, and of a very different reception into abiding habitations! Nevertheless, we cannot deny that this carnal misapprehension connects itself with a fundamental principle of truth; many at that time might so have understood Him, discerning something of the meaning of His words, but unable to free themselves from the carnal notions of the Old Testament typical system. But the fundamental deficiency in this view is twofold:—in not marking, first, that the *αἰώνιοι σκηναί* point to that same future *after death* (the most essential *ἐκλείπειν*) which the *following* parable discloses; and then in not discerning that the parabolical lord of the steward can only be, in the *contrasting* application, the great God whose is all our substance, since in *κἀγώ*, ver. 9, Christ requires that to be done righteously, which the *κύριος* of the steward was constrained to commend as wisdom.

Olshausen is open to the same charge, for his interpretation (after his fundamental character as a spiritualist), properly speaking, only *spiritualises* that of Schleiermacher, placing in the stead of the Roman Cæsar the *κόσμος* or *ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου τούτου*.

[1] Lange adopts the above view, and finds in the rich man "Mammon himself, the allegorical Plutus, the Spirit of gold, the genius of money, the demon of avarice." Most ludicrous, then, is the interpretation of the calling to account and the dismissal—that is, the disagreement arising between the new principles and the old covetous nature, etc. Most strange, how-

"Such an overreaching of the κόσμος or the devil, as Jesus here teaches, is the way to render back to God what rightly belong to Him!" Here there must be two Lords in contradistinction to one another, and the expositor speciously (and it is the only plausible point in this exposition) refers to ver. 13—"he who thus wisely was διασκορπίζων τὰ ὑπάρχοντα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου πλουσίου truly served the true Lord; he despises the one to belong wholly to the other, and with the possessions of the one labours for the objects of the other." Pity, however, for this exposition that there is nowhere a trace in the parable of that *other* true Lord, in whose service and for whose ends the steward favoured the debtors; pity that when this other Lord does actually enter in and speak, He does not say—Serve Me! but —"Make *yourselves* friends, who will receive *you!* Be ye equally *wise* as that steward in his care for himself, but let your wise care be for eternity! Then will I *also* commend you for doing wisely, even as that lord did." Where is there in all this a single trace of two opposite and contrasted lords? Finally, does the κόσμος or ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου *commend* the craft which takes away his possessions for the service of God? Is it then the spirit and temper of this world thus to deceive the Prince of this world? Nothing but confusion arises from this, if the word is read just as it stands. The lord in the parable is indeed himself a child of this world, but not on that account in the application the Prince of this world; but in the *contrasting* application Christ Himself incontrovertibly takes his place with His—"*I* say *also* unto you."

And who are the *stewards* over the mammon, that which is least and another man's, which the glorious Lord over all leaves in their hands, overlooking the unrighteousness which still cleaves to it, that they may use it aright in love, that being alone the true use of it for Him and for ourselves, that being alone its profitable employment?—These we are all; but now *first* the Lord spoke to the Publicans who turned to Him, as St Luke

ever, is the explanation that "Jesus terms this unfaithfulness of the pious as it regards mammon fidelity in that which is least, that is, that this is the *least thing* which should be expected from a Christian!" The thoughts of Jesus are here utterly perverted; on this view, ver. 9–12 cannot possibly have any fair interpretation.

intimates in the first verse,—overlooking this we must go astray throughout. Zyro revives the old interpretation of Vitringa, which regards the *Pharisees* as being here described to be the appropriators to themselves of the saving elements of the Jewish faith entrusted to them by God, and as being exhorted rather to deal kindly and dutifully with the poor debtors of the Lord, *in specie* the Publicans; but this, in common with every *direct* application of the parable to the administration of *spiritual* gifts and possessions, is excluded by the simple consideration that in His own solution of it, vers. 9–13, the Lord adheres simply and expressly to the *mammon* proper, and its wise, discreet, and faithful dispensation. There is thus much truth underlying all this, however, that our Lord does actually include the covetous Pharisees as the objects of His address (ver. 14); and knew well from the beginning that they, if they came with the Publicans to Him as His disciples, might thus use and apply His instructions.

But let this suffice for the prelusory polemics: let us now approach the text ourselves, first giving our own general view of its simple contents.

I. The parable itself exhibits to us an unjust steward, and in a threefold point of view: first, the *account* which is demanded of him; then his *prudence* in extricating himself out of this embarrassment (of such a kind, however, that he is still the unjust steward); and finally the *commendation* of this prudence, as it is enforced from his similarly unrighteous and selfish lord. But it is here taken for granted, as the teaching of the former parable, that in this threatened reckoning the grace *of God* absolves the penitents who confess *their* sins, that they are by no means dismissed and cast away, but rather, as impoverished, are endowed with a new dispensation of goods; and here we may note the transition to that style of *contrast* in which the parable enforces its teaching. Similarly it is presumed, that the prudence of *this* steward, thus directed towards God and divine things, is the precise counterpart of chap. xv. 18, 19. Finally, while the commendation of his prudence, bestowed reluctantly by his lord, forms the distinctive close of the whole parable, and without any reference to the involved injustice, our Lord immediately adjoins (as a *transition* to its interpretation) a corrective estimate of the meaning and value of that praise—"*For* the children of this

world," etc. This He brings into distinct prominence, by His tertium comparationis, the *contrast* which enters into the application of the parable.

II. The express explanation, which He Himself goes on to give, contains, first, the proper *interpretation* in ver. 9, followed by a further explanatory continuation, to obviate all misunderstanding, of all the fundamental ideas of the parable. This latter goes over naturally and necessarily into a solemn *warning* against an impending second condemnation, if they who were absolved in the first reckoning should not use the gracious permission and obey the rigorous command, to use the mammon left in their keeping for the good of their souls, faithfully and charitably and prudently employing it as good stewards. First: *this* fidelity in giving away (the honest prudence of the children of light), such an administration of the lesser earthly goods as is well-pleasing to the true Lord is now a discipline, preparation, and approval for the dispensation and enjoyment of the higher possessions. For fidelity or unfaithfulness (mark now the plain and undisguised contrast!) in little things and in great, coincide and are one in their internal principle (ver. 10); the use of earthly property is thus the standard—regulating the *entrusting* of the greater, essential good, that which is the true riches, even in the present life (ver. 11), and the final *bestowment* of the same as the original inheritance and actual possession in the next world (ver. 12). In which it is at the same time *hinted*, that the true riches as merely entrusted may be taken away again, as another man's, from those who are untrue, and unfaithful! Thus the discourse speaks plainly of two kinds of *goods;* and now, *secondly*, ver. 13, two *masters* are also introduced for the first time—for this fidelity requires an undivided heart for God alone, which *serves God* in the use of His gifts, and turns those earthly goods to His service in the salvation of the soul which Idolatry turns into a God instead of using aright.

Vers. 1, 2. The ἔλεγε δὲ καί is elsewhere a general connecting formula, but in this place it is manifest from the process of thought, and especially from the continuation in ch. xvi. 14, 15 of the scene opened up in ch. xv., that a direct sequel to the pre-

ceding is here intended. This is so manifest that Zyro, to whom this connection does not approve itself, is obliged critically to set aside both the remark of the Evangelist in ver. 1, and the φιλάργυροι ὑπάρχοντες in ver. 14. Our internal criticism, on the contrary, shows us that the καί in ver. 1 and ver. 14 clearly correspond, and that πρὸς τοὺς μαθητάς stands related to πρὸς αὐτούς, ch. xv. 3, consequently the μαθηταί are not this time the Apostles and all the disciples in common, but those newly received, the Publicans who were drawing near and hearing His words, who indeed form the opposite party, in the present concourse of hearers, to the Pharisees. It is a further argument for this, that in ver. 9 these "disciples" are supposed to have worldly goods, and indeed such as were in some way connected with previous unrighteousness: but this is altogether inapplicable to the Apostles who had left all and followed the Lord. It is obvious, however, that the teaching of the parable applied to all His other disciples, as far as they were the possessors of property; as well as that it was designed to pierce the consciences of the *covetous* Pharisees who heard it (as we remarked before and ver 14 shows); the Publicans, however, who must, like Zacchæus, after their conversion have felt the question stirring in their souls as to what they must do with their acquired possessions, were especially referred to in this discourse. Thus, as He had already been graciously justifying the Publicans, speaking in their favour; so now, as Bengel remarks, He solemnly teaches them their new duties as His disciples, after they had through repentance been admitted to mercy. The table at which the Saviour of sinners eateth with them, is not always spread; the feast of rejoicing which celebrated the Prodigal's return must end, and give place to the new duties of a nobler fidelity. The ὑπάρχοντα, however, which the steward possesses are by no means the same as the goods which the prodigal son had wasted: that parable referred to the resources of life, bodily and spiritual in common; but this, according to our Lord's express explanation, ver. 9–13, gives prominence to *Mammon* (which involves more than mere money). And with regard *to that* every man is God's *steward*, and these Publicans are regarded as under obligation of fidelity in its use, not only to the Roman Cæsar, but to the Great Proprietor of all. That which in ch. xv. 31 was

said under another point of view, holds goods of *every man* in the great house of the Father, in the inverted sense—All that thou hast, is Mine!

But the contrasting *parable* brings before us, first of all, a narrative of *this world*, just as things are accustomed to go in it:—an unfaithful steward, a lord who as a rich man appears to be very zealous for the conservation and increase of what he has, finally a discovery of the fraud by information. There are never wanting in the world unjust stewards, nor spies and informants, as they are well designated by the indefinite διεβλήθη—for διαβάλλειν does not signify the falsely accusing or slandering, but simply is distinguished, as a secret, envious information, from the open and honourable κατηγορεῖν. "Men always complain against the unjust steward; but just because he is of such notorious ill fame, no one is willing to be the man." (G. R. Rieger.) The accusation of others against this one, which in the narrative may be supposed to have originated, after the fashion of the world, in the desire to get his place and do just as he had done, is an intimation and remembrancer to us that similarly all unfaithfulness is surely known and condemned before God. Ὡς διασκορπίζων is not as the Vulg. has it, quasi dissipasset, but more correctly with Erasmus—*ut qui* dissiparet, he was informed against as now wasting[1]—which in the German (als hätte er durchgebracht—that he had wasted) does not come into sufficient prominence. The complaint is true; all the expositors who will redeem the steward's honourable character, strangely forget that the man himself on the first notice, ver. 2, of a reckoning being exacted, admits the guilt in his conscience, and resigns himself hopelessly—my lord taketh from me the stewardship! The complaint is literally true as to his διασκορπίζων, for this hitherto reckless and foolish spender,[2] because necessity made him thrifty and cunning, had actually laid by nothing for himself, but had lived from day to day in unthinking extravagance of good living—he thinks of himself as a beggar, if he must give up his office.

[1] Comp. Xenoph. Hellen. ii. 3, 23. διέβαλλον ὡς λυμαινόμενον τὴν πολιτείαν.

[2] The διασκορπίζειν is indeed an echo of ch. xv. 13, but the wasting of the goods here is viewed in a different and more restricted aspect. As the deep undertone of its meaning rises the thought, that we scatter our goods, so far as they are God's, when we do not husband them for *His* purposes.

He has not been totally immethodical and lawless, for there are at least γράμματα, acknowledgments of debt, afterwards forthcoming, though not registered according to strict rules of bookkeeping, and certainly not with their amounts recorded; thus he is a dishonourable man of the middle class—there is a little method and sense of responsibility preserved; for the rest he is thoughtless, and imprudent in his present selfishness, *without care for the future.* And now his lord, having his attention aroused by many reports, suddenly says to the steward, summoned into his presence—τί τοῦτο ἀκούω περὶ σοῦ; that is, probably, *not*—Wherefore do I hear? (τί for διατί), but—a construction which seems much more pertinent—"What kind of thing (τί and τοῦτο emphatically together) is this which I am obliged to *hear* of *thee*, my steward? Is it true, or canst thou clear thyself from this imputation? I did not, when I made thee οἰκόνομος, and have not had reason while I have continued thee in office, to think that thou wert a διασκορπίζων; but I hear it now from all sides, answer me, whether I have heard aright or not." It is not his lord's purpose *in any case* to dismiss him, thus making the account demanded merely a *surrender:* this has been gratuitously inferred, and an impropriety argued from it, in his lord's removing the steward on the evidence of a secret information and without any examination, thus justifying him in the conduct which he afterwards pursued! It is this very *investigation* which is intended by the ἀπόδος τὸν λόγον. Lay before me thy accounts! We will see—then with a tone of warning on account of the accusation, and with an eager, selfish fear for his endangered property—*if they do not agree, if I find* that I have heard aright, thou wilt be no longer my steward. (The reading δύνῃ instead of δυνήσῃ has also this meaning.)

Vers. 3, 4. Now becomes the inconsiderate fool suddenly *cunning* and wise—this is a significant crisis in the parable which many misapprehend: The children of the world are unrighteous and unfaithful from the beginning, they become crafty when need urges them; certainly, however, then! This sudden, and after its kind, laudable prudence of the steward in forming his *decision*, is described to us in the three stages of his soliloquy. First, the clear perception of the necessity of his case, the expulsion being inevitable, in which the question becomes—*What* shall I do?

Then the pondering of the various methods of extrication, which only made the case worse—The one I cannot, the other I will not! Finally, the crafty expedient—*Now I know* (ἔγνων) what I will do, to help myself! Then follows, as an essential part of this shrewd wisdom, the *execution* of his project, ταχέως, without much delay, vers. 5–7.

The nature of their relations itself requires us to understand, without any express mention in the narrative, that time was allowed the poor man to arrange his account, and that time of course includes the whole account from the third to the seventh verse. When God announces to us our dismissal, whether the final or one preliminary; when the decree goes forth upon us—Thou mayest be no longer steward! Thou must die! there is yet given us ordinarily a time of grace, with the stern though gracious exhortation—Set thine house in order! If the merciful God says—Come and let us reckon with one another, let us settle our account! yet does He hear the supplication, and lets mercy triumph over judgment. His hearers must have thought of that, with the history of the prodigal son still echoing in their ears if not moving their hearts, when a similar predicament thus opens itself up before them. But here there is no father and son, here is nothing which could immediately portray the true relation between God and man: this narrative teaches and intimates its warnings by sheer contrasts. Instead of coming truly *to himself* (as ch. xv. 17 εἰς ἑαυτόν) the steward speaks ἐν ἑαυτῷ, remains with all his thinking and deliberation the same idle, presumptuous, dishonest man as he was: his straits only teach him to add cunning to his unfaithfulness, or awaken the cunning which was latent in his nature. He declares it twice, at the beginning and at the close, that the lord taketh away from him his office, and with it his livelihood, and that his dismissal is an inexorable resolution. He knows "*his lord*," and his lord's care of self well enough, to prevent the entertainment of any vain hope; he knew that there would be no room for confession and pleading, and he has no satisfactory accounts to bring. Thus it is scarcely right to interpose here a preaching of condemnation against this man because he does not contemplate a third method in addition to the two which he rejects, that the true Tertium datur of acknowledgment and supplication

does not occur to his mind amid his evil imaginations. Such thoughts are right in the further application to ourselves—Thou, poor sinner, hast indeed to do with God, with whom there is plentiful forgiveness!—Scarcely, however, has he fairly looked steadily at his hard fate, than he sees (with that full and unvarying hardness which we already see to be the wicked ground of his natural cunning), that everything after all is not irretrievably lost. He has heard from his Lord's lips nothing worse than *οὐ δυνήσῃ ἔτι οἰκονομεῖν*, nothing about punishment or imprisonment. I am yet then left with a *τί ποιήσω*; and it is for me to devise the answer.[1] Two prospects rise before him—*digging* or *begging;* that is, either to begin now honourably to earn his bread by hard labour, or with a sudden self-abasement to ask it at people's doors. The one he *cannot*, the other he *will not:*[2] the idleness of the effeminate good liver forbade the one; the pride of the great man, who had been hitherto a considerable householder and played the rich lord himself, forbade the other. He might have done the one with honour and decency, but the idleness of the sound man says instantly—I *cannot* do that, I have never learned to work heartily! As Grotius quotes from Aristophanes, Av. 1432—*σκάπτειν γὰρ οὐκ ἐπίσταμαι*—in which the digging is used proverbially for the most common and menial daily labour: and we may cite as more obviously to the purpose Faust's words—"Ich kann mich nicht bequemen,—den Spaten in die Hand zu nehmen." Then as to the *begging?* Of this the sometime administrator is altogether *ashamed*—not with nimiâ modestiâ (as Bengel says), and not as we have seen in Ecclus. xl. 29–31, from a right principle and honourable feeling—but the whole gives us a finished picture of a child of this world, as he is to be seen everywhere in his thrifty cunning. "Nothing corresponding to the particulars of this pondering consideration can be pointed out in the application, but it is simply part of the parable," says the Schullehrerbibel of Brandt;

[1] This is the reason of the *milder* expression afterwards, with which he comforts himself—*ὅταν μεταστα θῶ*, comp. Acts xiii. 22. As it were only—*transferred* to another situation or *οἰκονομία*. The aorist for the presentiated future.

[2] Luther's *mag* in the old form, that is, *Vermag*, is misleading as our phraseology goes now.

this time correctly. If, going beyond the parable, we anticipate the application, and spiritualise or generalise this particular feature, then may we say with Jensen (Stud. u. Krit. 1829. 4) that the impossible labour is the helping of self, which, in the case of a man from whom is taken that which he had, appears to be out of the question; and the abhorred begging is the passive dejection in such most miserable circumstances, like the sinner's self-abandonment to ruin and reprobation. Thus may we, in harmony with the Lord's design, further interpret the parabolical words of this man, which, however, in itself is generally an apt proverb, suiting his present condition.

On the other hand, we must regard as impertinent, and as a *πάρεργον* beyond the requirement of strict exegesis, all the endless homilies about *working* and *praying* which have been founded upon these words; and all the protests, however good and ingenious in themselves, against the idle and proud refusal of the natural man to put forth his energies for himself, or to abase himself unto prayer. They are impertinent, inasmuch as the application to prayer would require that the dismissed man should have pleaded with his lord, and not have thought of begging at his neighbours' doors; and, further, because *in the parable* this *οὐκ ἰσχύω* and *αἰσχύνομαι* are admitted to be valid, and placed to the account of the man's *crafty prudence* which is commended:—consequently, upon this application, there would be recommended the laying aside of all labour and prayer, and instead of them the dubious performance of good works towards our neighbours, so far as that might be possible. Again, however striking in itself, it is exegetically inadmissible to place this steward in parallel with the prodigal son, such a parallel, to wit, as G. R. Rieger draws, exhibiting the fundamental contrast between penitence and impenitence:—"Both came in trouble and need, both seek to help themselves. The one uses right means, humbles himself, applies himself to prayer, and offers himself to the work of a servant. The other hangs upon his former repute, is ashamed to beg, and thinks himself too weak to labour." This and all similar well-meant *preaching* is part of that system of inexact and confused realisation of its main points which has more or less perverted even the traditional and correct interpretation; for he who forgets the tendency of the whole in the

exposition of the details, must bear the blame if the commendation of shrewdness and wisdom which comes afterwards is found to be obscure and inharmonious.[1] It is an ingenious use of this isolated expression, though no exposition of it, to make it describe the unwillingness and impotence of the natural man to labour (in a spiritual sense) and to pray: as, for example, the Princess Galitzin speaks of the "speculative understanding," as saying—I cannot explore it, and I am ashamed to pray (in the right place!) for what I cannot attain. This, however, has a real point of connection, and falls in at least with the interpretation given to the parable by our Lord, which finds in this helplessness of the steward the ἐκλείπειν, ver. 9, of death, no time being then left for good works in order to the attainment of the everlasting habitations—"where he who could not dig falls himself into the grave, and in the general need all prayer (as Matt. xxv. 8) avails no more."[2]

No sooner has the man in his straits realised his entire situation, than his suddenly wakening craft discovers a plan—ἔγνων τί ποιήσω. In his joyful haste, and with the speed which he knew to be necessary, he does not wait to propose to himself, or state to us, the resulting decision of his cogitation, but we discover it afterwards in the actual φρονίμως ποιεῖν.[3] Craft is essentially practical as we here see—it asks simply what is *to be done*, does not disguise its emergency from itself, ponders all possible means of extrication, selects the best, and sets to work at once upon that. All this is *formally* and relatively laudable; else, and in its true character, the craft of this worldling is as

[1] Similarly we read in H. Müller's Erquickstunden, to give one more example out of many:—"If thou wilt choose, then choose the two first means! (not the third, which the Lord also recommends?) Beg and dig, pray and work, open mouth, hand ready. Prayer is thy heaven-carriage, labour thy earth-carriage, both bring much blessing to thy house, if they are driven well."

[2] Thus the artless Hiller, whose life of our Lord Jesus in verse carries out Bengel's exegesis, and will always be well worthy of being read on account of its many ingenious thoughts and turns of expression.

[3] Clearly and accurately (according to Alford) ἔγνων is distinguished from ἔγνωκα. The latter would be,—I know, am well aware; but the ἔγνων implies,—I have just arrived at the knowledge, an idea has just struck me, as it were, εὕρηκα—as we had also remarked above.

unspeakably infatuated in its forgetfulness of eternity, as that τοῦτο ποιήσω of the ἄφρων (chap. xii. 18). The ἵνα and ὅταν of his self-complacent ἔγνων goes not beyond this life, thinks nothing about that other daily impending and quite different μεταστα θῆναι τῆς οἰκονομίας. He thinks he has hit it well—ἵνα δέξωνταί με, ut *sint* qui me recipiant—or, looking back upon his own thoughts—"that the people, at whose doors I must otherwise have begged, may be glad to receive me into *their houses*, which is far better!" Or, as he is now speaking with full consciousness of his plan, he keeps the debtors in view—"that *they*, whom I will craftily make my friends, may take care of me—I will provide for myself hospitable homes!" To defraud his lord, even now at the last, and to prosecute his injustice even now that it is condemned, does not cause him *shame;* this, at least, he *can* do. It is altogether in vain to attempt with all kinds of subtlety to justify this wise οἰκονόμος τῆς ἀδικίας *in himself;* all whose cunning εἰς τὴν γενεὰν ἑαυτοῦ goes only to this, how he may in some way or other carry on his habituated easy life; whose blind infatuation only thinks of man and of this world, yea, whose baseness finds its consummation in this, that he in his sly selfishness reckons upon the return of gratitude, not altogether failing, on the part of others.

Vers. 5–7. It is not improbable that he had shown the same kind of good-nature towards poor wretches before, in the squandering of his master's goods; so that it was a very natural expedient—the children of the world at least do thus act towards one another with all their ἀδικία. Nothing can be more forced than the misinterpretation which Brauns put so confidently forward, according to which all that is related from ver. 2 to ver. 8 took place on the spur of the moment, rather like an enchanted dream than actual life, and in flat opposition to the scope of all our Lord's parables. "Instantly, and before he left his lord's eye, he conceived his design, had the debtors summoned into his master's presence, paid the accounts thus re-written *out of his own funds*, thus with most excellent φρόνησις uniting both restitution and benevolence by one stroke:—restitution, inasmuch as the debtors never could have been able to pay anything themselves; and benevolence, inasmuch as these poor people were extricated from great embarrassment. Thus both creditor and debtor were touched

to the heart, and their sympathies enlisted in his favour!" This is, in very deed, a master-stroke in the art of reading the direct opposite of that which is written. If the steward were then so rich, what made him think of being reduced to beg? where then is the ἐκλείπειν which the Lord indicates in ver. 9? and let every unprejudiced person think of all the other rank inconsistencies in this view. This would have been no compensation to his lord, but a mystification in his very presence, which must have excited his anger all the more. We must admit what Niemeyer, Schleiermacher, D. Schulz, v. Gerlach, and others have maintained, that such a lowering of the debts was within the prerogative of an *οἰκονόμος*, such as he was at that time—else would the reconstructed bills not have been valid. But this does not assuredly extend to the *justification* of the steward's conduct. It was in his power and option to do so, as we see, but not in his *righteous* power; what he here does to his lord's prejudice must always be counted unjust, and is only a continuation in his old practices of this sensualised *οἰκονόμος τῆς ἀδικίας*.

The *χρεωφειλέται* are not simply contractors (as B. Stein and Grossmann think) whose contracts the lord had already looked into, but debtors for produce furnished and not paid for. He *asks* them craftily about the amount of their obligation, though he may be supposed in most cases to have known it already; his object being to stimulate their gratitude for the remission of so much of their debt:—is it not true that thou art rightly indebted for so much? He says boldly, condemning thereby himself,—"owest thou *my lord*," not *me;* so that he might not on his own responsibility remit any part of the debt. "*Take thy* bill, which I now restore to thee—see how merciful I am, much more than my lord, about whom, between ourselves, we need ask no questions—*quickly* (*ταχέως*, raptim, furtim, which intimates, too, the lord's absence—before he comes and sees it!) subscribe with thine own hand a lesser amount!" These debtors, like all others, are nothing loth to write a less amount, but, like children of this world, very soon take the share of this advantageous piece of villany. Two examples are recorded, which include, under oil and wheat, all kinds of liquid and dry productions of the soil; and at the end, ver. 7, we may suppose—*and thus on-*

wards through all the debtors; for ver. 5 mentions ἕνα ἕκαστον. Nor does he speak to every one apart, but has them altogether at the same desk, as it is critically noted in the σὺ δέ of the second instance. And why so? Because these poor people, in one another's presence, were abashed, and would be terrified into complaisance by the idea of a general settlement of accounts. Why does he not remit to any one the whole debt? Partly, because the lord, when he came to know that this man or that was one of his debtors, might find an account apparently right at hand; and partly, because he would keep the people in a humble frame of mind still, since, if all their debt had been discharged, they would have become puffed up, and forgotten to be thankful.[1] Finally, on the same principle he remits to the one fifty out of the hundred, and to the other twenty—not (as Olshausen infelicitously here incorporates) for the sake of the application "to a discreet distribution of our benefits according to the present need of their objects;" nor (as Lange says, imputing too much good to the steward) "that he first achieved the most desperate stroke, and then gave way to something like *moral prudence*." But the man is altogether and throughout *wise*, he acts with a *crafty discretion* and *arbitrariness*, which somewhat propitiates his own *pride* on being dismissed; thus keeping their obligations in the minds of the debtors—"The great man could do with us as he listed, but he *gave* everybody something, at least." We should note that he selects cunningly the *good-natured*, not so cunning as himself, whom he may "*despatch*, one after the other, with the utmost possible haste."[2] And it is just from these that he reckons upon an unstipulated gratitude.

Ver. 8. It ought never to have been matter of misapprehension, that the narrative of the parable is still going on, and that

[1] The crafty man expects *gratitude* of itself: it is needless to interpose (as Bahrdt does) any stipulation—"for this, as long as I live, let me have the half."

[2] But not "deceive" as Stein expresses it. He inserts also the stipulation that they should receive him into their dwellings, and explains that now these easy-minded people find themselves out of their reckoning. "It should have been a question to them whether the entertainment of this steward, who had been used to high living, would not cost them more in the long run than the amount he had remitted!" But we should not push our calculating exposition *so far!*

the commending κύριος is not Jesus Himself,[1] but he who had been thus described by the steward in vers. 3 and 5 as his lord. Our lord continues to speak in all that follows down to ἤκουον ταῦτα πάντα, ver. 14. If *the Evangelist* were now suddenly interrupting the narrative, how comes it that κἀγὼ λέγω so directly follows; and whence the ὅτι, similarly in strict connection;—for the only other supposition, that it is an intermediate reflection of St Luke, is surely out of the question! It is the –I say unto you *also*—which distinguishes our Lord from the lord of the parable, in whose place Jesus Himself now enters. Without such a *conclusion* one main characteristic in the parable would be wanting, the answer, namely, to the question—What said his lord to such a stroke of artifice? Was it divulged, or not? This last knavery also became known and notorious—the supposition of that was necessary to the tendency and scope of the whole, and to the winding up of the entire parable, and it is merely hinted at as being understood of itself. While the Lord reports the commendation which was bestowed upon the steward, He at the same time, to obviate all misconception, *condemns* utterly the spirit and fundamental character of this steward, for He calls him again and markedly the *unjust* steward. To construe ἐπῄνεσεν with τῆς ἀδικίας,[2] as other knavish people have done, is most assuredly incorrect, for the most external glance at the mere phraseology must show that οἰκονόμος τῆς ἀδικίας is one phrase, just as in ver. 9 μαμωνᾶ τῆς ἀδικίας, and in chap. xviii. 6, κριτὴς τῆς ἀδικίας. It is altogether monstrous, and opposed to the whole current even of this world's life, which the parable is portraying, that his lord should commend the knavery which had been practised upon himself, the injustice *as* injustice; enough that he now leaves the ἀδικία out of the question, since he finds, even in this knavery, one object of commendation, which is clearly defined—ὅτι φρονίμως ἐποίησεν. We have pointed out the total consistency of the ἀδικία of this man, in

[1] It has been said that St Luke always uses this word in relation to Jesus! A very strange remark, and worth nothing in this case; against which Stein, however, has very needlessly and unskilfully referred to chap. xii. 46, xiv. 23.

[2] Even Schleiermacher thinks that we must necessarily accept this, and leave the *honest* οἰκονόμος without an epithet!

opposition to all the forced endeavours to justify or apologise for him which directly contradict the express declaration of our Lord: —what then was there to *commend* in him? Was it that he did not add murder to his knavery, and kill his lord instead of allowing himself to be dismissed? Then would it be matter of commendation in every sinner, that he is not yet a devil, and has not courage and power to sin worse than he does! Was it that he had some slight method in his business, so that at least γράμματα were forthcoming in the case of the debtors? That would be in direct contradiction to the admitted διασκορπίζειν. Or was it that he had not in past times thought of and provided for himself? So much the worse was the recklessness of his mad administration! Was it that he did not go and act with the debtors as that other wicked servant did in Matt. xviii. 28, in order to scrape together as much as he could? But that would have helped him but little, since the deficit was too great to be made up, and his dismissal was already certain;—this knave knows that very well, is far from desirous to show any mercy towards them, and thinks only, as his soliloquy showed us, *of helping himself!* Thus it is *this*, and the cunning necessary to it, which, apart from all else, is the subject of commendation. Jesus now relates, that his outwitted lord (when he, sooner or later, found it out too late) praised him for *that*—this appears strange enough in itself, but is quite consistent with the world's ways. *For* to the children of the world the cunning of selfishness triumphs over right; the main thing, and the chief glory of a man is to extricate himself from embarrassment, no matter how; so that in the contemplation of successful and pre-eminent villany, its injury to their own personal interests may well be for a moment forgotten. Hence the Lord in this case cannot refrain from saying (in his heart or to others, not necessarily as beholding the knave)—"The deceiver has at last gone off craftily enough; that was not a bad stroke; I should probably have *done* the same myself, if I could have had the wit to *think upon it* so suddenly."

In all this it is taken for granted as evident, that the commended ἐποίησεν is the last stroke of policy with the debtors—apart from the proper historical matter of the parable, and what the steward *had done* in the situation in which vers. 1 and 2

find him. Every child would so read and understand the text, and yet the craft of exposition has not seldom taken a view exactly opposite. In particular, we would refer to a certain recent work of an anonymous author[1] devoted specially to the subject, which has made the parable of the steward the subject of a long examination, in connection with other high deep matters that pertain to the doubtful questions of exegesis. This writer cannot, at the outset, regard it as otherwise than impossible, that a master in this world would praise as prudent an act of treachery practised upon himself, and proceeds to give his own judgment and view. He then felicitously makes it appear that the steward gained his end, that is, perfectly satisfied his lord by his accounts, and earned the commendation—"Thou art a wise and honourable man, these slanderers have done thee grievous injustice!" and that *this* is the meaning of φρονίμως ἐποίησεν. Our Lord praised also, over and above, the unjust man, the knave! Then ver. 9 is perverted, in order to make it accordant, ἐκ τοῦ μαμωνᾶ being made to mean—Independently of mammon, is another way and not by its aid; another interpretation is put upon the documents, and everything done to torment away the old exposition, and to establish one utterly contradictory:—how all this was done may be matter of marvel, but it is actually to be read; giving us one more example of the facility with which ingenious men go astray upon this parable, over which a special fatality seems to preside! It is scarcely necessary for us to say that in vers. 3, 4, not one word is said about correct accounts. The soliloquy of the steward not only shows, as Jansen admits, that his evil conscience is troubled; but that he had resigned himself to his dismissal as an inevitable calamity, having no thought of re-establishing himself in his master's confidence, and that his sole care now is to provide for himself after the loss of his office. This was his aim, and in prosecuting it he acted φρονίμως, for φρόνησις has to do with the means to an end generally, while σοφία has reference to a good end, as Zyro correctly adduces what is known to every one. On the other hand, Brauns brings forward his confident assertion that φρόνιμος never occurs in the New Testament in a bad sense, and con-

[1] Beiträge zur Beleuchtung schwebender Fragen über Geist und Welt, Glauben und Schrift, Religion und Staat. Erfurt 1839.

sequently that the *οἰκονόμος* had not been guilty of any *ἀδικία* as such. But Matt. x. 16 gives us the word at least as a vocabulum *μέσον*, and it undoubtedly has a somewhat ironical meaning as applied to the Corinthians—1 Cor iv. 10, x. 15; 2 Cor. xi. 19. But we first have the vox media afterwards when the children of the world are termed *φρονιμώτεροι*; there is no allusion to a bad sense at all, for the *κύριος praises* the prudence as something in itself good. And good it is, and must undeniably ever be, as the Lord here testifies, exhibiting the greater prudence of the wicked in compassing *their* ends as an example which shames the good:—if any one has too fine a sense of morality, or too keen a critical acumen, to tolerate this, let him contradict the Lord Jesus if he pleases, but not misconstrue and pervert His plain words!

In *φρονίμως* and *φρονιμώτεροι* we have the obvious key of the whole parable; he must be blinded who does not see that. The earnest diligence with which the children of the world pursue their end, to wit, to deliver themselves from temporal calamity, may, and indeed *should* put *us* to shame, even while we have ourselves a much nobler aim; we should copy their example, not indeed in their unrighteousness, but in the diligent wisdom of the just (Lu. i. 17); we should make to ourselves friends, or provide for our own reception in eternity, even as they make careful provision for their earthly life, beyond which they have no care. And is not this application perfectly just—may we not preach it in every congregation, without being troubled by any such scruples of feeling as we have referred to?

The *children of this world*, to which class all the personages of the parable belong in common, pay much regard, as a rule and in the mass, to *prudence* and crafty thrift—hence the commendation of this lord. Jesus, in adding this explanation, describes and at the same time qualifies the ambiguous character of this praise, in order to found upon it the general application—Suffer not yourselves to be surpassed and put to shame by *such* cunning! It is incorrect to assume, as Olshausen does, that the *υἱοὶ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου* are not quite identical with the *πονηροί*, and not absolutely hostile to the *φῶς*, only, as it were, oscillating between the two; for we should thereby lose the sharp point of the rigorous contrast, which goes to the same issue as the exhor-

tation to the Apostles to be wise as serpents. It is equally wrong to take *υἱοὶ τοῦ φωτός* ironically (as Braune does, understanding by them the Pharisees); the contrast has the same fulness, reality, and earnestness as in Jno. xii. 36; 1 Thess. v. 5 (Eph. v. 8). The *φῶς* indicates here, *first of all*, truth and sincerity as opposed to the falseness and overreaching of this world; but much more than that is contained in it! The children of the world are children of darkness in their *self-deception*, which makes their narrow and limited prudence unutterable folly; and in this view the dullest child of light is wiser than the wisest of the children of *this world*—who only thinks of and provides for this present life. Now, this wise steward has forgotten from the very beginning that he is only a steward, and may expect a day of reckóning in the lower as well as in the higher sense; it has never occurred to him to ask—What will become of me in my injustice if I should *die* to-day or to-morrow? Rather is it his sole care to provide for himself a lodgment in the interim, till he can procure another *οἰκονομία*, and play the old game more wisely. Hence the Lord's saying is only true with the addition—*εἰς τὴν γενεὰν τὴν ἑαυτῶν*. *Here* lies the irony directed against the wisdom of the children of the world, here is the full solution of the question how they can be a pattern to us.[1] Not, as has been most superficially said—they are wise and cunning erga coætaneos, *i.e.*, invicem, inter se, unus erga alterum; but assuredly its first meaning, and that applying to both parties, is—in and after their *kind*. (For this meaning of the word, see what is said upon Matt. xxiv. 34, in Vol. iii.) Erasmus: in natione suâ —for the two kinds of children are actually of a different origin, race, people, and kind. But again the *εἰς* is to be regarded as essentially *τελικῶς*, as the deep meaning of *γενεά* actually involves—for *their* life, *their* space of time, the children of which they know themselves to be, and act as such. Thus they care for things which pertain to time, and their share of it—but let your higher prudence provide for *everlasting* habitations! They give their best attention as a whole (not reckoning individual

[1] For, as Beyschlag (Rheinische Monatscrift, März 1850) rightly remarks, it is not a picture of life in its *innocent* realities, but a procedure of its thoroughly *unrighteous worldliness*, which the Lord here selects as the foundation of a *parable* for instruction in the things of His kingdom.

examples of indiscretion) to the great question how, especially in time of urgent pressure, they shall get on for this life, and their zeal is in itself commendable; while ye, alas! are far from being so prudent in your preparation for death, and that eternal and real life which follows it. Pastor Flattich in Würtemberg explained this phenomenon,—the simple ground of which is that the light of true wisdom unto salvation slowly and hardly enters into our earth-bound nature, cleaving to this world—more quaintly than correctly, when he said—"to be sure, the dog is more knowing than the sheep!" This is something like the interpretation of Ebrard, who says—"since the children of light are often too much inclined, in thinking upon heavenly things, to pretermit and neglect their earthly duties, and to forget their worldly prudence." But this scarcely touches the meaning of our Lord, who does not commend to His sheep the dog's wisdom as such, who is not speaking of attention to earthly duties as such; but is exhorting us to give as much earnest diligence to the pursuit of eternal salvation as the worldling does to his temporal well-being. "*Fidelity* in earthly relations, and in the administration of earthly good," is indeed required from us, vers. 10–12, as merely our *wisdom*, but yet it is as wisdom towards the attainment of our *eternal* and abiding good; apart *from that* the children of light may forget all earthly things in their contemplation of heavenly—which has its place, when the question is the *highest* wisdom of *simplicity*.

Ver. 9. The originator of that conjectural reading—κἀγὼ ὑμῖν λέγω· οὐ ποιήσατε κ.τ.λ. (But do *not* ye so!) had not the slightest notion of the true meaning of the whole discourse. Are we then, according to his view, to retain the unrighteous mammon, spending it upon ourselves or heaping it up, supposing we have it? That is not what he means, but—we should use it for the good of our neighbour! He takes offence at this, that as the words run, the Lord seems to counsel stealing and over-reaching in order to make friends for ourselves—but he simply does not read the words aright. The mammon is *assumed* to be μαμωνᾶ τῆς ἀδικίας, just as the οἰκονόμος τῆς ἀδικίας before. It is evident of itself that we are not to imitate the *unjust* steward (that title surely was enough!), and not to *acquire* the mammon in his method; and when the Lord goes on *to say to*

us, what now nevertheless follows, He places Himself on a parallel with the lord in the parable, and tells the Publicans who already had such mammon in their possession, and could not possibly now adjust all the individual claims of others in making specific restitution, how they shall henceforward act with regard to it. The clear and unbiassed view which we take of His lofty but condescending words is this:—As that lord discovering too late the fraud, pretermitted, and, as it were, forgot it, in his consideration of the craft displayed, so I, the true Lord, in the name of My Father say unto you preliminarily,—that not only does the righteousness of God *permit*, but the grace of God *requires* from you absolved sinners, the prudent use, in all good works, of that earthly property which has been in times past gathered together by unrighteousness such as cannot now be otherwise repaired; and that ye use the utmost wisdom in administering it for others, with a full faith in an eternal recompense of mercy to ensue. Which gracious permission Flattich has this time somewhat better illustrated by the master who tells his maid-servant that he has fruit in his garden which she may take for herself and distribute among other people, that his fruit may raise up friends for the poor orphan.[1] Hiller: "God somewhat recedes from His right, press into it thyself, He gives up His goods that you may turn them to good account: make thyself by another's goods rich in good works, *it is no loss to Him*, He notes it not." If a pious king places men in the situation of stewards over a charitable foundation, they should not accumulate either for him or themselves, but keep it before them as their one object to give out as much as possible in beneficence, and bring as much satisfaction as possible to the charitable wishes of the founder:—and so with God the true "rich man" whose stewards we all are in the occupation of earthly property. And indeed we have *all* been, and not only the Publicans, more or less unrighteous in the past; though in reckoning with us our repentance and conversion are accepted, and it is said to us —Ye *may* be henceforwards, and ye must be, stewards, but better, more faithful and more wise, for your own salvation and My good pleasure.

[1] Süddeutsche Originalien von Barth. Erstes Heft.

The Lord, at the same time, takes the most favourable possible view of the unjust steward's selfish and earthly-prudent conduct, when He takes as the tertium comparationis, the expression: *make to yourselves friends!* More prudently, indeed, and more safely, than he in the parable, who, with all his self-seeking, only reckoned upon the gratitude of men equally sinful and selfish with himself—so that indeed all his calculations might, after all, have been miscalculated. When the Lord in this condescending comparison[1] sets the enjoyment and advantage of this friendship before His disciples as the aim of their well-doing, it is presumed and *taken for granted*, even *because Jesus says it*, that His disciples are only to make to themselves true friends by the exercise of true friendship, and only to ensure to themselves a compensating gratitude by acts of genuine love. The φίλοι are assuredly not (for then it would be an expression wonderfully out of harmony with the parable) "*those in heaven*, God and the angels" (as Ebrard says); but they are to be sought among our fellow-men and brethren. The covetous and hard-hearted man prepares for himself in the poor whom he does *not* help, no other than *accusers* at the eternal bar; while the benevolent man who ministers to their wants makes them, on the contrary, his friends! "Many understand well (says Zeller in the Monatsblatt) how to make with their mammon servants, tools, and companions, but these are not—*friends*. A man cannot buy or hire these with gold; he only makes himself friends by *what* he gives, and by the *manner* of his giving it; that is by the *love* with which he imparts his goods. He who wins *hearts*, makes himself friends." This is not inappropriately enforced upon the Lord's words; for when *Jesus* begins to speak, He uses every word *in its only befitting and right meaning*, elevating and *illustrating* everything subordinate and common in the parable; and this is the right transition from the parable to its interpretation. Further, the receiving into everlasting habitations intimates to us *what kind of people* we before all things should make our friends, the poor children of God, the brethren of the Saviour, the heirs of the

[1] Which, indeed, stands upon the same ground as the exhibition of *fidelity* towards God as being *prudence* for ourselves (see Matt. xxiv. and xxv.), and the general phraseology of Scripture which speaks of *our* σώζεσθαι as the good pleasure of God. Is this essentially different?

inheritance; as Zeller goes on excellently to observe, "not the people who are cast out in eternity, since they will not be able to receive guests into heaven." But again, since we are not the searchers of hearts, and judges before the time, and cannot beforehand know who will be one day the inheritors of the kingdom, our love and benevolence must be universal; regarding every man as one called to salvation, turning away from no object of distress who may one day, as the brother of the Judge of all, witness and plead for us, or who, by our good deeds in the name of Christ, might be aided in coming to Christ and to salvation. Thus Neander is not quite right in drawing the conclusion that good deeds shown only *to the pious* are here intended; for is it not our bounden duty to distribute our benefactions with the view and in the hope of making the objects of our benevolence grateful, and thus pointing to them the way of piety?

Of *forgiveness* and *remission of debts* the discourse does not directly speak (though many, Jensen for instance, digress in that direction, supposing thus that they interpret the parabolical element); for it is said expressly, *with the mammon*—consequently the distribution and giving away of substance is enforced upon those who possess it, as such. Ἐκ τοῦ μαμωνᾶ may be either understood as referring to the *means* by which, the source whence, we may accomplish the making of friends; or (as Brauns says, and, it may be, correctly) we may regard the ἐκ as a proper material *out of*. "Let mammon go, and make for yourselves out of it—that is, ἐν τῷ ἀφιέναι καὶ παραδιδόναι—friends."[1] The advisableness and *wisdom* of thus freely dispensing our mammon for our true advantage in the interest which eternity yields, is further grounded upon the fact that it is, and must ever be, a mammon of *unrighteousness*:—which pregnant expression,[2] so much twisted about by expositors, is very probably connected with a proverbial description of it among the Jews—מָמוֹן שֶׁקֶר,

[1] It is incorrect and artificial with Hartmann to regard μαμωνᾶς as abstractum pro concreto—*the rich*—and connecting this with ἀδικίας, to make it—the transitory, worldly rich. Make to yourselves friends of, or *among* the rich of this world, that they, in your ἐκλείπειν into poverty, or when old age requires it, may take care of you!!

[2] Very unnecessarily and impertinently by Stein compared with μισθὸς τῆς ἀδικίας, Acts i. 18, which refers to something very different.

according to Lightfoot. The most obvious meaning involved in this, that of an *unrighteously obtained* substance, has given much needless offence to interpreters: this certainly is the point of connection between the interpretation and the parable, where we find the steward giving away that of which he robs his master; and it precisely suits the Publicans as it answers the question which they must ask, as to what they must do, as the children of light, with that unrighteous mammon which they had acquired before their conversion. They must do no other than seek, in the manner most pleasing to God, and at the same time most truly and eternally profitable to themselves, "to disencumber themselves of the last farthing" (as Loskiel says in his "Etwas fürs Herz auf dem Wege zur Ewigkeit"). Of course it is supposed that they acquire no more unrighteously; and equally obvious is it—for the Lord would never teach a violation of the law of Moses (Ex. xxii. 1–4)—that unjustly gained property must be restored, when and where it is possible; but that, for the most part, is regarded as possible no longer, and then conscience itself recommends the hearty distribution to the poor—Zacchæus does both at once and together. (Ch. xix. 8.)

But this first and more obvious meaning is very far from exhausting the depths of this word, spoken not to the Publicans *only*, but to us all, as far as we are in any wise similarly situated. Worldly substance is termed *mammon* by our Lord (as we saw on Matt. vi. 24), not as it is a creature of God, but as it is a possession *in our hand*, and more directly as it is the false good and the eagerly-coveted desire *of our hearts*, that is, as it is made an *idol:—there* lies already, without its having been obtained by any unjust dealing with our neighbour, the fundamental unrighteousness which ever adheres to it. Mammon, as such, is never, in the first place, righteous; but all earthly possessions, in the second place, in their course and process through the hands of men must more or less certainly and manifestly become a mammon.[1] Thus most of these Publicans had already, for the sake of *mammon*, in the unrighteousness and idolatry of their hearts, become the slaves of a foreign dominion against their own people,

[1] "The children of light should always be conscious with regard to mammon that something *uneasy* adheres to its possession," as Lange has well apprehended it.

who therefore scorned and cast them out; and so now every man whose heart is set upon retaining and accumulating the substance which, as he may suppose, has been acquired in legal and honourable ways, is only carrying on the same ἀδικία of the heart. In sum, sin is, as matters actually are in the world, the origin and principle of all property and personal substance; selfishness and self-appropriation, indirect acquisition in the sight of God or man, idolatry and uncharitableness, adhere to it necessarily as it has come from its former possessors, as well as in the hands of those who now hold it. Is not this so? The consciences of all who are truly converted to righteousness, in the possession of much substance, must everywhere confirm this declaration. It is "either the fruit or the seed of unrighteousness and sin"—as Gossner says. Jurists seek for the security of title-deeds from something external to the possessor, and aiming to go back to the origin of all *dominium*, imagine its first beginnings either in an ideal condition of nature, or repose upon a necessitated *possessio* and its *bona fides:* but God allows no such rights to human hearts, He neither utters any beati possidentes of φιλαργυρία, nor admits any bona fides for the retaining of what a man has; his *bona* fides is grounded upon his dispensing and ministering, as a steward, the manifold grace of God. "The superabundance should be common; if it is not so, but is perverted to *self* and becomes *mine*, then it becomes *unrighteous mammon*." (Berlenb. Bibel.) As the parable, in its application to us, makes us all no other than the stewards of God, it actually abolishes the idea of *property* in its strictest sense as being ours: and all retention and accumulation of mammon for its sake it makes ἀδικία. Similarly the simple-minded Loskiel, from whom the ingenious critics might often take a hint—"the unrighteous mammon is money or money's worth, *which does not appertain to us of God or of right*, but has been *appropriated* to ourselves, nevertheless, in this or the other way." Either there adheres to it through the acquisition and possession of former owners, from whom it has been transmitted or has come into our hands, an injustice which must be rectified by ourselves: or that unrighteousness is derived to it from our own covetous and selfish clinging to it.

Therefore is all mammon *taken again* from the temporary possessor: it is no abiding and real good, but deceives and betrays

its lord, who becomes its slave. (Prov. i. 19.) This is not, indeed, expressed in the word itself (as von Gerlach: which is unrighteous *to you*, deceives and disappoints you)—for ἀδικία must have a like meaning in vers. 8 and 9. But we may and we should deduce this as a *consequence*, since that which is unrighteous can only inflict a rightful retaliation of unrighteousness; and, as such, this thought is the profound undertone of the whole discourse. Money and earthly property has in itself *no value:* as soon as any such is attached to it, it becomes an ἄδικον. That is the ἀδηλότης πλούτου of which St Paul speaks, 1 Tim. vi. 17, whose whole discourse in that place down to ver. 19, corresponds generally with the fundamental thoughts of our Lord's sayings in this place, and gives us its best scriptural exposition. Schleiermacher's remark—"money has no obligation to remain with us, it is its well-known nature to circulate," is more sprightly than devout; and forgets that everything, as a creature and gift of God, should be continuing and not deceive and disappoint any one, an ἀληθινόν (as it indeed fundamentally always is); but that the unrighteousness which converts gold into mammon is avenged by the very circumstance that its expectation from it is deceived. Thus Bengel is right, as things are among men, injustus mammonas, quia non jure fert appellationem bonorum. Similarly Augustin before—de mammona iniquitatis, *i.e.*, de pecuniâ vel divitiis, quæ malæ fuerant acquisitiæ; aut etiamsi bene, *non tamen veris*, sed quas *iniquitas putat* esse divitias, quoniam nescit quæ sint veræ divitiæ. (Civ. Dei 21, 27.) It is the best, therefore, and the wisest plan, to let this "unsanctified gold" simply pass through our hands, that the heart may not come to depend upon it. It must be diligently given back again! The children of the world in *gathering* and heaping it are practising a self-deception which will issue in eternal want: they are unjust to that God who requires of His stewards that their *gathering* should be a scattering abroad. He is not an accumulating ἄνθρωπος πλούσιος, increasing his capital, like that man in the parable! He desires no other putting of his money out to usury (Lu. xix. 23), than the restoration to it of its true and only value, and its diligent use for the kingdom of heaven in all the ministrations of self-denying charity.

The prudent man in the parable provided for *houses*, into

which he might be received; and that is the reason why our Lord here names the αἰωνίους σκηνάς. The Israelities journeyed into the land of their inheritance in their *tents* (Jos. xxii. 4): and in this expression there was both a backward and a forward reference,—even the houses of stone and the walls encompassing their cities were still but as the pilgrim tabernacles of the wilderness, an interim provision only, before those peaceable habitations and sure dwellings which God's people expected at the end. (Isa. xxxii. 18) *These* are the *everlasting* habitations, with *typical* allusion for the Israel of God;[1] yet not now precisely corresponding with the parable, not received into *their* habitations, as before their houses;—but those who are received themselves *may* through the grace of God receive others, just in the same sense as we may dispense to others of His gifts. The δέξωνται must clearly correspond with that in ver. 4; the recompense at the resurrection of the just (ch. xiv. 14) comes from God, but in connection with the testimony, desire, and supplication of the friends who had been acquired in life; and this is the real truth and ground of reality in the δέχεσθαι. "Heaven is, as it were, the estate of the poor, out of which they can bequeath legacies to their benefactors."[2] What a most gracious representation this is, far from being merely an unreal accommodation of the idea! We will not disturb its simplicity of presentation by any eschatological investigations as to how, and how far, its truth will be made manifest in a progression of accomplishment; for these last things are not clearly revealed. Thus much remains certain, that both the Old and the New Testament, rightly understood exhibit alms-deeds to us as laying the foundation of a treasure in heaven, that charity bears its interest in eternity even to the unforgotten cup of cold water. (Matt. x. 42.) We may confidently rest in this middle interpretation, without "going astray, either into what would be a decided, though disguised *Crispinismus*, or

[1] Of which Winterberg made a perpetuum hospitium, a life-song abode, —which alone the wisdom of the children of light should care for!

[2] St Augustine in the chapter before cited: Mirari autem soleo etiam apud *Virgilium* istam Domini reperiri sententiam. Nam cum Elysios campos poeta ille describeret, ubi putant habitare animas beatorum, non solum ibi posuit eos, qui propriis meritis ad illas sedes pervenire potuerunt, sed adjecit atque ait: *quique sui memores alios fecere merendo.*

into the papistical undoubted perversion of the doctrine of *merit in* good works." (Zyro.)

There is yet one expression which we have not closely examined —ὅταν ἐκλίπητε. The reading preferred by Schulz and Schleiermacher—ὅταν ἐκλίπῃ (ἐκλείπῃ) scil. ὁ μαμωνᾶς (when the deceitful mammon fails you, departs, and leaves you deceived; and the Peschito confirms this—דמא דנמר, si defecerit; comp. moreover ch. xii. 33, θησαυρὸν ἀνέκλειπτον) seems at first sight to be recommended as introducing the fundamental idea which we have just been dwelling on; but when we look more closely into it, we must perceive that it is opposed to the internal connexion of the whole discourse, and can only have crept in as an explanatory gloss. First of all, the making of friends with our mammon which is here enjoined, presupposes a distribution of our substance and a severance from it; and we cannot suppose at the same time any such cleaving to it as would be disappointed by an ἐκλείπειν. And then this reading is in general not sufficiently comprehensive, and harmonious with the context; for, in this injunction of ver. 9 every expression used in reference to the course of conduct recommended must embrace in itself both a strict applicability to what is laid down in the *parable*, and a reference to its more extended *interpretation*. The ὅταν of this verse must correspond with the ὅταν μεταστα θῶ, ver. 4 (from which similarly the ἵνα δέξωνται, in connexion with the σκηναῖς is derived), and consequently the *persons* addressed must be the subject of the change of circumstances here represented as contingent; similarly, to preserve the conformity with the αἰωνίους, this contingency must be generally the dismissal from life upon earth. And so we find it in fact in the ambiguous expression which is pertinently chosen—ὅταν ἐκλίπητε (or, with very respectable MSS. ἐκλείπητε); that is, first, when ye fall into the ὑστερεῖσθαι of ch. xv. 14, become involved in utter failure like the man in the parable; but also as the *interpretation* of this—when ye incur that certainly impending bankruptcy of life which abolishes all personal possession, and the goods and powers of life fail and give place to the reckoning of death! This is the foundation of the well-known phraseology of the Sept.—ἐκλείπειν, decease (giving up the ghost, Gen. xxv. 18)—but here the general expression falls back upon the specific defectum pati sug-

gested by the parable. "Since ye cannot by any worldly craft or prudence evade *that*, make it the care of your nobler prudence to provide in time for an imperishable possession and an abiding lodgment in the future γενεά. Especially ye Publicans, whom the Pharisees not untruly reprobate as sinners, for ye are all of you unjust stewards of the goods both of body and soul, in the sight of your true Lord! And all, whoever and wherever ye are, who cling to your mammon, with all the unrighteousness that clings to it—think of the end!" Finally, let us steadily regard in its true light this most gracious accommodation of our Lord to man's innate self-regard and earthliness of thought (found constantly occurring throughout His teaching); for He here condescends to point out to us the way of true thrift and prudence, by which we may most surely secure our possessions against the fires of judgment, and, as it were, preserve the heritage which we leave here for the superabundant restitution of another life. (Eccles. xi. 1.) "As in earthly things ye are prudent enough not to let all your goods lie at the mercy of any one calamity. If ye really loved your money, ye would desire to enjoy it more than merely these few years. That farmer would not really love his corn who should not be glad to throw a few grains of it into the earth in order to reap it again with ten or twenty fold increase. I would counsel you prudently to ensure your worldly goods against the spoil of time, and constantly lay up your produce beyond the walls of this transitory field; for you will carry nothing hence away. See how both faithful and prudent the Lord is in His way of teaching, how He strives to win you in all kinds of ways, even *adapting Himself to this passion of men*, and showing you how you may *eternally* enjoy your possessions!" (This is the pithy homiletic-exegesis of G. R. Rieger, and is not to be contemned).

Vers. 10–12. The progression and connection of thought in this epilogue were exhibited in our general review of the whole at the beginning, which now may be referred to again with advantage. It is not the "true *charity*, assuming, when embodied in outward acts, the form of a dissipation of our goods" which is pointed out as true *wisdom*, but a real *fidelity* (the word four times occurs) as it respects God's commandment, which would have His earthly goods thus applied. This is the process of the

advancing interpretation; for the fundamental idea of our Lord's instruction here appears not to be the love which we owe to our neighbour, so much as the accomplishment, on our own part, in the obedience of faith, of the Divine will of the Great Proprietor, in order to *our own* standing before Him in final acceptance; in order, as it were, to our own *deserving of eternal possessions*. This true fidelity is the prudence of righteousness, for the final account, as in Matt. xxiv. 45. Fidelity in the steward of earthly substance is the dispensing and scattering of seed for the better harvest which is abiding in eternity. Let it be observed, once more, how in the inverted relation between the parable and its interpretation, this *unrighteousness*, ver. 10 (in which the unjust steward does *not* stand as a type), is placed as the opposite of fidelity. First of all, ver. 10 presents a general introductory and convincing truth admitted by universal experience and consciousness; which has its application to the province of the administration of earthly property, and then, as a proverb and similitude, bears a further and higher application. Count nothing *slight*, be it great or small—was the sentiment of the son of Sirach, Ecclus. v. 18. The essential fidelity of the heart keeps this precept; it is the same for all objects alike. Fidelity in little things is itself something *great*, it is indeed the greatest and only true *fidelity*. If a man begins aright with little things, his conscientiousness is assured and disciplined for the greater things which may bring greater temptation; he who is not unfaithful with regard to the smallest farthing, will not be so afterwards with thousands of pounds—hence stands the first clause in the first place. But he who is unjust in little things *is* unfaithful also in much; that is, if not at once in open apparent reality, he will soon be such; and still more clearly, the many ἐλάχιστα already make up the great πολύ. All fidelity in great things without similar fidelity in the little, is but outward seeming; and similarly all petty, micrological straining out the gnat while the camel is swallowed, is no true fidelity of the heart. Consequently also the converse holds good: He who would be, and continue to be, faithful in that which is great, let him be so preeminently and perseveringly in the petty details continually occurring in life—for there is an inseparable connection between the two! But it is not the Lord's design *only* to say—"Whether

ye possess much or little *of mammon*, deal with it as I now counsel you, for two mites well laid out will gain you friends in eternity, will bring you interest and recompense for the kingdom of heaven." But vers. 11, 12 immediately carry the idea further, and show that all earthly possessions generally, be they Rothschild's millions, are only ἐλάχιστον—"the least thing which God can and will bestow upon man"—comp. 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3, which almost sounds like a citation of our Lord's words. Yea more, the whole of ver. 10 is reproduced with its application to the domain of spiritual possessions and the gifts of grace—as we find it in Lu. xix. 17.

All these antitheses, with their various expression, are obviously resolved into one great antithesis between the earthly and the heavenly, the temporal and the eternal. All earthly substance, which the children of this world turns to mammon, is in itself ἐλάχιστον, through the deceitfulness of sin which clings to it ἄδικον, and must ever be to the inner, immortal nature of man, by reason of its adventitious value, and transitional possession, an ἀλλότριον. As opposed to this, every the faintest spark of spiritual grace from the gift of God is πολύ; such possessions alone are the ἀληθινόν which never deceives (mark now ἄδικος μαμωνᾶ in opposition, manifestly equivalent to ἄδηλος ψευστής), and by right divine this only is essentially and eternally *our own!* The *alien* earthly good, not a real *personal property*, which cannot become essentially our own,[1] changes it owners with every generation, when the inevitable ἐκλείπειν asserts its rights: we dwell "in our houses" all of us only as tenants, and like those whom we receive (just as the תּוֹשָׁבִים before God, Ps. xxxix. 12) are only usufructuaries; and not indeed that with free discretion of our own, for we are *stewards*, and that which is another's is God's, who hath *entrusted* it to our fidelity, to be so faithfully employed as to win the nobler and only *real* good![2]

[1] As Beyschlag comments upon this saying, in the before-mentioned beautiful treatise—die Gütergemeinschaft im Lichte des Evangeliums (community of goods in the light of the Gospel) Rhein. Monatschr. 1850. 3—"Thou art Spirit and life, and therefore only by spirit and life to be enriched: earthly property is dead matter, which leaves thee in death, and then proves thee to have been a fool for having thought to make it thy own. Luke xii. 20."

[2] When Grotius translates ver. 11—the *true* mammon, or genuine pos-

This indefinite neuter in τὸ ἀληθινόν, τὸ ὑμέτερον, stands emphatically significant, *intimating* that it is left to our own intelligence to observe *what* that means—for it is the discretion of *wisdom* which is here enjoined! But as soon as our right apprehension has reached this first stage, there is opened to it a new view. In the words of our Lord, which retain the wise indefiniteness of their *hinting* and *warning* character, the two contrasts of vers. 11, 12 do not remain strictly parallel, but the reference before intimated to a progressive *confirmation* of fidelity passes over to spiritual things also. It is most assuredly obvious that it is the gift of God's grace, the pound given wherewith to gain other, which the Lord terms τὸ ὑμέτερον; that is, according to Meyer's note—"that which is appropriate to your true nature, that which was originally (in the Creator's counsel), and shall be again (in redemption), your own, the true dominium restituendum of the lords of the earth created in the image of God, which was promised to the heirs of heaven by a θεὸς δώσει ὑμῖν." Moreover, this critical *question* τίς ὑμῖν δώσει, concerns not merely unfaithfulness in the use of earthly good, but unfaithfulness in regard to the earnest of that inheritance already received in the time of probation. Wilt thou certainly *retain* what thou hast, given to thee only preparatorily as a trust, and will God then one day give thee the full inheritance of eternal *life*?[1] Thus we see that even the *true riches* cannot become ours with perfect right and full possession, before we ourselves have become true or faithful;—in the other case even the ἀληθινόν is taken

sessions, he overlooks three things—that *mammon* in itself has been used already to describe the ἄδικον of earthly property, and cannot bear a good application; that μαμωνᾶ as the name of an Idol and Master (in ver. 13 opposed to God) cannot bear a neuter adjective; and that τὸ ἀληθινόν is parallel with τὸ ἀλλότριον, ὑμέτερον, ver. 10 having begun these neuters. Erasmus has it correctly—quod verum est.

[1] To which essentially belongs, in the consummation and fulfilment of the προστεθήσεται Matt. vi. 33, the possession of all the riches of the world in the restored powers of the spirit to which matter should ever be subservient; the dominion over the earth, and the heirship of all things glorified. "We cannot attain upon this earth to a perfect possession of our lost divine attributes and powers, because the Divinity may not *commit them to our trust* on account of our external nature." (Christianæ Käpplinger, Beschreibungen über das Wesen der Gottheit u.s.w. S. 63. comp. S. 91.)

from the unfaithful as being ἀλλότριον, instead of yielding up to them all its fulness. This is the progression of the double meaning in ver. 12 as following ver. 11; as this again finds its fundamental reason in ver. 10.

Ver. 13. This saying, as reproduced here with great significance from the Sermon on the Mount, needs no further interpretation than we gave it there; as uttered now it forms a transition to those further repetitions of what had been earlier said, which the Lord, vers. 16–18, designedly here introduces. In this connection[1] it has two aspects; according to the one, it says (in Jensen's words)—"the servant of mammon makes (most unwisely!) that his master, which he, according to his true Master's design, should dispose of with absolute authority:"—do ye make mammon subserve your eternal salvation! According to the other, it declares that *fidelity* consists in serving one Lord alone, and unfaithfulness in attempting to unite the service of another lord:—your true Lord is God, as your true good is the heavenly inheritance! By which, in conclusion, the discourse gives it to be understood that the entire parable and its doctrine was to apply *to the Pharisees also;* and hence ver. 14 springs up in immediate connection with these words, their ἐκμυκτηρίζειν bursts forth, for their consciences convict them of being φιλάργυροι. As it regards the contrastingly different, yet essentially similar, position of the Publicans and the Pharisees, between God and the world, Olshausen well says that "the former (that is, those who now turned to Christ) were outwardly most deeply involved in the world, but internally they were under the powerful influence of a longing for the Divine; whereas the Pharisees, on the other hand, were outwardly linked with things Divine, as the born representatives of the Theocracy, but their inward life was attached to the world, so that they turned their theocratical steward-relation to earthly ends." Thus the Lord's exhortation cries aloud to the hearts of *both*, to make their decision.

[1] For the sake of which the οἰκέτης is here appended, first of all (for it was to be supplied in Matt. vi. 24), equivalent to δοῦλος, in contrast with the κυρίοις; but then also at the same time as parallel with οἰκονόμος, who is no other than an οἰκέτης after all. Which allusion to the *steward* is well preserved in Luther's *Hausknecht*.

THE UNCONVERTED SINNER'S FIRST PUNISHMENT AMONG THE DEAD, AFTER REJECTING THE WORD OF REPENTANCE AND FAITH:—THE RICH MAN IN TORMENTS, AND FATHER ABRAHAM.

(Luke xvi. 15–31.)

Every unprejudiced reader who is not under the mischievous influence of the fragment-hunting, disintegrating critics,[1] will observe that this parable stands in close connection with the former; and that their fundamental ideas lie so deep as to be perfectly one. The Pharisees also have discerned something, in what had been said, appropriate to themselves; for, they scornfully set their faces as if they would justify and exalt themselves:—but it is shown only in their features and gesture, not as in chap. xv. 2 with a murmuring λέγειν; it is as if they thought ταῦτα πάντα scarcely worth a word of reply, though in reality their courage was abashed. They would have said, if they could have uttered it: "Why all this trouble to teach such unjust Publicans as these a righteousness which we, the pious dispensers of alms, and we alone, have long exhibited!" while at the same time they were thinking in their hearts—"and we are shrewd enough, withal, shrewder than thou counsellest, for we can dexterously contrive to serve God and Mammon too!"[2] Such thoughts, however, must have been transmuted in their secret conscience into self-accusations, while the Lord, whom they had better understood than they professed, throws His clear, calm, and piercing words into the tumult and hypocrisy of their secret imaginations, directing to them immediately the discourse which had scarcely been suspended. "Yea, verily, ye too may hear this, would that ye might! But ye will not receive counsel, ye

[1] The singular Sepp seems to have become one of these; for we find him saying:—"The parable of the beggar Lazarus seems as if it had dropped down unintroduced from heaven among the other *disjecta membra* of the discourse!"

[2] This seems more probable than the imputation in Braune:—"He makes light of riches, for he is poor: let him talk ever so long, he will accomplish nothing!" The reply to their secret thought, ver. 15, will not suit the supposition that such was its tenor.

will not be converted: though ye are ἐγγίζοντες where I teach, it is not for the sake of truly ἀκούειν, but in order to γογγύζειν and ἐκμυκτηρίζειν. Ye are rich both in mammon and in righteousness; over whom, however, there is impending a miserable penury and failure of both!" Thus does our Lord's discourse oscillate between the two parties around Him: it passes from the penitent Publicans who condemn themselves, but whom God receives and justifies, once more to the impenitent self-righteous, who justify themselves while God knoweth their hearts, who will condemn and cast them down. On the one side are the Publicans, excluded from the rights of Israel, and contemptuously brought down to a level with the heathen;—on the other the proud and secure *children of Abraham*, who have the Word, but use it not for their salvation, who hear indeed, but *hear* not, who *believe* not, because they will not *repent!* Let it be observed, moreover, how, in this disclosed foundation of the whole discourse, the conclusion of chap. xvi. returns back again into the beginning of chap. xv.; and let us note preliminarily what the wealth and sumptuous living of this man, with the frightful ἐκλείπειν predicted against it, was designed to *signify* for the Pharisees and the ὑψηλὸν of their καρδίαι! While it may here be presumed, from the analogy of the elder son in the former parable, that in the profoundest *background* a warning, threatening Love is still seeking their souls; yea, that the tormenting flame in Sheol, of which we shall afterwards hear, with the Τέκνον μνήσθητι of Father Abraham, may actually summon even these to a late ἔρχεσθαι εἰς ἑαυτόν, which the Publicans' entering into the kingdom of heaven before them, had already experienced for their good.

It will be seen that all the individual sayings, vers. 15–18 (which precede the last parable as an *explanatory* address, just as vers. 10–13 followed the middle one), are most accurately adapted to the innermost position of all. Possibly we have here an epitome of the chief points of the Lord's description, which had other links of connection;[1] though it is more probable that the whole was spoken by our Lord to these hearers in this unconnected and designedly enigmatical way,

[1] Not, indeed, as von Gerlach too strongly says—a brief hint of a much longer reproof.

for the awakening of their attention and the rousing of their consciences.[1] "Yea, *ye are they* whom I mean, the so-called *righteous* (ch. xv. 7); who, however, before God are only on that account greater *sinners* in the pride of your hearts, an abomination instead of cause of rejoicing in heaven! ver. 15. *For* ye scorn and reject with hateful violence, and pervert in sinful transgression, the Revelation of the truth and love of God which is brought plainly before your eyes. Law, Prophecy, and Gospel in their full inseparable harmony are exhibited to you in this day of grace, offer themselves to your acceptance—and ye despise the grace of the Gospel, ye break the truth of the law!"[2] The former is the *Βιάζεσθαι εἰς αὐτήν* of ver. 16. The latter follows in vers. 17, 18. "For *why* is it that ye revolt against the preached kingdom of God? Because ye perceive and have heard from My lips, that in that preaching the law is not and cannot be abolished, but *fulfilled*. Ver. 17. But ye have never humbled yourselves under the law, your hearts being filled with pride, unfaithfulness, hypocrisy, and adultery; ye have perverted and broken it (like false stewards of the *λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ*), for the gratification of your lust and avarice, and for your own base political ends!" This will approve itself finally as the true meaning of ver. 18..

Ver. 15. The *δικαιοῦν ἑαυτούς* (comp. ch. x. 29) is the *trusting in themselves* that they are righteous (ch. xviii. 9) which, however, does not fully sustain itself in their consciences before God; hence they all the more anxiously seek to justify themselves, exhibit themselves as righteous, and acquire the reputation of being such *before men*. Fundamentally no man *can* justify himself before *God* (however daringly he may use the language of ch. xv. 29, and xviii. 11)—for God *knoweth the hearts* of all (Ps. vii. 10; 1 Kings viii. 39):—he who will absolve *himself* is, nevertheless and on that very account, not absolved of God. This *ὑψηλόν* as being the most essential, inmost idolatry, is the essential *βδέλυγμα* in His sight. (Rom. ii. 22.) *Τὸ ἐν ἀνθρώποις ὑψηλόν* is by no means altogether parallel with, and the same as, *ἐνώπιον*

[1] Schleiermacher on this occasion says correctly—"Christ had only to hint what to His immediate hearers would be, if only half-spoken, much more intelligible than to us."

[2] Roos: ye are a people prepared neither for the old time nor for the new!

τῶν ἀνθρώπων before, although the opposite is set down again as ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ; but as the Lord had just been speaking of their *hearts*, it means that pride of spirit which was actually present *in* these perverted and corrupted ἄνθρωποι; and it is this alone which is the abominable thing in the sight of that God who looketh at the heart and not at the outward appearance.[1] (Prov. vi. 16, 17, xxix. 23.) But this pride of heart exhibits itself in a twofold manner, inasmuch as they who are inwardly lifted up make themselves great *before* other men, and further celebrate and magnify (enviously, yet admitting it) the external, or self-arrogated loftiness *in* others:—*so far* ἐν ἀνθρώποις includes (with a natural double-meaning which occurs elsewhere) the ὑψηλόν *among* and *before* men, both at the same time; as the Vulgate endeavours to express it by *hominibus*. Much that is extolled by men, yea all that regards this outward commendation alone, is most highly offensive to the God who searcheth the heart. (1 Sam. xvi. 7.) Thus it is here—"*that which men* regard as highly estimable in you," just as foolishly as ye seek their high estimation. The *reason* of this, however, remains:—That which is *high*, ironically spoken, that is, what would be high and exalt itself (without being raised up on high by God, 2 Sam. xxiii. 1), and thus rob the only Lofty one of His honour; that it is which is abomination and idolatry in His sight. This is the ὑψώματα of 2 Cor. x. 5, and thus appears the loftiest *human* virtue and "righteousness" to be no more than a wicked pride of heart! Before grace has humbled and justified and exalted the abased sinner, all the highest excellencies to which any man may have attained, however they may have exalted him in his own estimation, or given him value in the estimation of his fellow-worms, are but τὸ ὑψηλόν, abomination in the sight of God! (So does John Newton, in his letters, pertinently ex-

[1] Thus it is far from intimating what has been superficially extracted from it—that the high, eminent, and rich as such, kings, and masters on their chairs, are despicable before God! Schleiermacher would find here an oblique glance at Herod, such as might with some reason be applicable to ver. 18. A large portion of the Pharisees were sycophantic adherents of his; and it is imagined that the Lord would bring it to their minds, that while they were despising the Publicans on account of their serving Rome, they themselves occupied a similar relation to the untheocratic dominion of the Idumæan family.

pound our text.) Thus profoundly does our Lord's first word penetrate the hearts of these unhappy sinners, to whom He speaks "as unto wise men," with His piercing—"God knoweth *your* hearts!"

Ver. 16. Let the reader consult our exposition of Matt. xi. 12, 13. The ἕως Ἰωάννου (which in its conciseness emphatically refers to something well-known, and already before urged against them) must not be supplemented by merely supplying—"*were valid* till John" (then being abolished, against which ver. 17 protests); nor will it help the meaning to insert κυριεύουσι, δεσποτίζουσι, as if the contrast were simply between the rigour of the law and the mildness of the Gospel (for the *Prophets* are not without gentle consolation);—but the right complement, the true antitheton to εὐαγγελίζεται is already in St Matthew προεφήτευσαν, which has been consequently inserted in some codd. as a gloss.[1] But this προφητεύειν (of which Rom. iii. 21 also speaks) is assuredly a *preparation*, since the *law* and the prophets together do what John does at the end—prepare the way for the grace of Christ, and that preeminently by *humbling* to *repentance*. The ὑψηλόν of the Pharisees had never submitted to that; they cannot, therefore, and they will not comprehend or tolerate the kingdom of God which, with its preaching to the poor, plainly declares itself to be the fulfilment and realisation of all that had gone before; but it may be said of them in a bad sense —πᾶς εἰς αὐτὴν βιάζεται. We shall not now repeat what was said in Vol. ii. to justify this interpretation as necessary for the passage here: it is obviously required by the δέ of ver. 17, and the entire connection as it appears when closely examined. Thus the πᾶς in a certain sense corresponds with the πάντες of chap. xv. 1, but by way of contrast—"Among *you* there is *not one* that repenteth to the joy of angels; *every one* of you, rather, that is, the first, the best, acts in refractory opposition. *Ye* rebel and strive mightily against the kingdom of God—instead of using a nobler violence in prayer, and striving to enter into it—in spite of its being the fulfilment of all preparation and prophecy, the end of all your service of God (Acts xxvi. 6, 7), and of its gra-

[1] Schleiermacher supplies insufficiently—ὁ νόμος . . . . ἐκυρίευσε, ἴσχυσε, for this is not the true "antithesis of εὐαγγελίζεται."

cious *evangelical* announcement of itself.[1] Ye think, in your scorn, that such a Gospel and such a kingdom is only fit for Publicans and harlots. But *ye* are no sinners! Is it so? How stands it between you and *the law*, which ye set against My Gospel, and which ye condemn Me for breaking?"

Vers. 17, 18. Ye know by the exhibition of My leading principles given on the Mount, or if ye have forgotten I repeat it to you, that—I am not come to abolish but to fulfil the law! We do not make void the law through faith—this must be ever an impossibility before God. Here we have the *strongest* formula with an εὐκοπώτερον, which exalts most emphatically the minimum of "moral order" (to speak in modern terms) above the maximum or totality of the physical system of nature:—rather would God destroy His entire universe than suffer one tittle of His law to fall away.[2] Observe the great contrast between παρελθεῖν (vanish away, pass, go out of existence) with the simple πεσεῖν or ἐκπεσεῖν, become invalidated, or remain unfulfilled. (Rom. ix. 6; 1 Cor. xiii. 8; 2 Kings x. 10; Josh. xxi. 45, xxiii. 14.) "And as it does not enter my mind to desire that which is impossible before God, to relax any of those essential, permanent obligations and requirements of the law, in the case of those sinners whom I so graciously receive as My disciples, and continue so condescendingly to teach (so, *e.g.*, counselling them no unrighteousness)—so no more shall *ye* be able with your βιάζεσθαι either to endanger the *kingdom* of God, or to *do away with* one tittle of the law which in that kingdom is to be established and confirmed. Though ye are actually striving, as much as in you lies, in your cunning to do both: ye revolt not less against the law than against My gospel, ye keep not but violate the commandments of God. This very law which ye hold up to confront Me, will nevertheless remain in force and will condemn you with its *eternal*, inevitable, righteous requital, *ye adulterers!*" This gives us the transition to ver. 18, which seems so singularly unconnected, and in which Olshausen, despairing to trace any

[1] Roos would very artificially defend the interpretation of Luther, which is not in harmony with the connection—"Every man—save you, presseth in!" This needs no refutation, let who may supply it!

[2] See, moreover, the exposition of this saying in all its breadth and depth in Vols. i. and ii.

connection in its literal sense, would find a figure analogous to Rom. vii. 1–4:—ye have become divorced from the law as from a wife! (On which view the marrying of this divorced wife in the second clause would not simply be superfluous, but meaningless: for his interpretation of this—that while they divorced themselves from the law in its spiritual and eternal significance, they nevertheless married it again in its transitory aspect, holding the Old Testament economy in that externality to which they had first reduced it—is most strangely forced and artificial.) We have only simply to bear in mind that the oriental and scriptural style of teaching, especially when dealing in gnomes and words of cutting reproof, does not expressly interject the connecting words, which, however, we must supply. Here it should be:—"*As for an example* your disorderly divorces, which I have only to mention as exhibiting your laxity of practice (as was said before Matt. v. 31), which the inviolable law, confirmed with new force by Me, condemns."[1] This demonstration was all the more intelligible to *them*, because, only a short time before, their national judicature, receding from the high standard of the law of God, had tolerated the public scandal which Herod's marriage with his brother's wife had occasioned. (Tertullian found an allusion here to this occurrence.) Thus the reference which Schleiermacher would assign to the whole discourse, will hold good as far at least as this outrage of Herod gave a pertinent exemplification. This circumstance stood in close connection with the just-mentioned death of John, and the end of his ministry (by which the way was prepared for the kingdom of God and the preaching of the Gospel); *they* had not, like *John*, done their duty and boldly said to the adulterer upon the throne —It is not lawful! The πᾶς thus obtains the force of—"even if it were the king;" similarly the striking ἀπολελυμένην ἀπὸ ἀνδρὸς instead of ὑπό does not merely strongly emphasize the invalidity of the divorce, but includes the circumstance in connection with Herod's crime, that a woman herself had abandoned her husband.

[1] Roos thinks that it was not necessary *here* for our Lord to insert any condition or exception (as in Matt. xix. 9, v. 32), because *their* divorces were altogether, and as a whole, adulterous. We have corrected this in Vol. i.

We are by no means to suppose that the rich man of the parable was a Sadducee, as many have thoughtlessly assumed; for vers. 29 and 31 would then be quite inapplicable. But the Lord seems to say:—"Ye Pharisees *live* a Sadducean life like Herod and his adherents, with whom ye quarrel about the law and the prophets, and the life which is after death; ye live as if there were none, ye do not *hear* the word which ye possess and which ye deal in—ye clothe yourselves and eat and drink very differently from the preacher of repentance." Then follows the last *parable* of this Trilogy, which with its ἄνθρωπος δέ τις ἦν (only observed, as far as we have seen, by J. v. Müller) follows in immediate connection:[1]—"*But* how is it with you and how will it be? *Hear* yet one thing more, in addition to all this, your own history—and even down to Hades—if ye will continue to be rich and highly esteemed upon earth!"[2] This parable, with its progressive application to the Pharisees instead of the Publicans, joins on to the beginning and end of the preceding one, inasmuch as it shows a πλούσιος in his ἐκλείπειν; but it descends therewith into the kingdom of the dead, just as the first had gone up into heaven:—Joy in heaven—*Torment in hell!* It depicts the torments endured there by one who had been a luxurious sinner upon earth, who had refused to abase himself but had remained impenitent and unbelieving to the end; and depicts it most awfully, if, peradventure, the word may yet pierce their hearts, by the double *contrast* with the comfort *there* of the pious man who had been so miserable *here.* And although there might be involved an intimation that love, even in those depths, had not utterly given up the sinner, but was still *seeking* to bring him to *reflection;* yet here, in these words of father Abraham to the νῦν δὲ rejected son, as before in the great Father's words to the elder son who had remained in the house, the

[1] For this δέ in the middle of the discourse is something quite different from that in εἶπε δέ, ἔλεγε δὲ καί—see *e.g.* similarly at ch. xvii. 1.

[2] Though this parable may possibly be fashioned upon other similar narratives used in the teaching of that age, yet we find in it abundance of what is proper to itself, and profoundly new, down to the κεφαία. It is the blending of given elements, the arrangement and harmonising of the simple ground-notes which are everywhere heard that exhibits the master of composition.

warning against *unbelief* sounds out much more distinctively in the ears of these Jews, against that unbelief which, in its process of hardening, had deserved such doom, and brought the impenitent man to the flame which held out small prospect of any further salutary μιμνήσκεσθαι and μετανοεῖν.[1]

In the *first* and briefer *portion* of the parable, the scene of which is still upon earth, there is exhibited before our eyes a rich man living in carnality and all the enjoyment of life, as an unfaithful steward of the law and the prophets, an unbelieving servant of Mammon—in the sharpest contrast with a poor, despised, righteous man; towards whom he does not act as the preceding parable required, and therefore constantly accumulates guilt. The *inward character* of both is only hinted at; just as their private thoughts and dispositions were concealed from the sight of men till the time came when the vale of perverting appearances falls off, and each takes his true place and condition. First we have this unnamed and yet well-known rich man's condition and manner of life, indicating the *end for which he lived*, ver. 19. Over against him is the helpless *God-help*, as his name written in heaven declares him to be, ver. 20. Then in ver. 21 we have the relation of one to the other; wherein, again, the piety of the poor man, and the neglect of the rich man, are preliminarily *hinted* at. But now comes the suddenly disclosed *second* part, the essential heart of the parable—"a narrative, with its scene laid in that other world; and which, if Christ were speaking in our day, would be called by our Polyhistors *a romance of heaven*"

[1] A friend made me acquainted, during the publication of the first edition, with a sermon of the excellent Harms on the first Sunday after Trinity, which represents this Gospel as being inopportune and alien to *such a season*. But this alien out of Hades vindicates his own significance. As the portions selected for Trinity Sunday itself refer to the *inscrutableness* of the ways and of the nature of God, and to the *new birth*, in which alone we can practically know the Three-One; so then begins the institution of the Church by that high teaching which places this world in its true relation to the next, warning us that the exhortation of the *Holy Ghost* to repentance towards God and that faith in Christ which exercises itself in love to the brethren (comp. the Epistle, 1 Jno. iv. 16–21), is contained in that *word* which we already *have*. This is a better vindication of the Gospel and Epistle than that which Strauss in his "Kirchenjahr" gives; comp. Nitzsch (Prakt. Theol. ii. 2. 391) who refers to "circumstances unknown to us" as the ground of the selection.

(as Kleuker says)—we would say rather, a romance of *hell!* For although it is certainly true—"so much that is deep, true, and transcendently suggestive is said of the two great regions of the other world, that every stroke of the delineation becomes the basis of a widely extended system"—yet the man in his *torment* must ever be the prominent central figure: the dead and buried unbeliever (whom the generation of the children of this world, and all his brothers above esteem meanwhile, according to Ps. xlix. 13, 14, to be happy and approve his sayings) in the torments of the kingdom of death! What a picture, and with what sublime assurance and repose presented![1]

Again there are two parts: the former brief and transitional, the other being the proper and most important *scene*, most dramatically developed. First is the *change of circumstances* generally, with the ever impending ἐγένετο δὲ ἀποθανεῖν of every-day life;—the one in Abraham's bosom, the other shut out from the place of happiness which he beholds, and in torment, vers. 22, 23. Then follows the more detailed elucidation of the *kind*, the *design*, and the *reason* of this torment, given in a parabolical colloquy between the tormented one and father Abraham, to whom he appeals in vain. Two supplications are rejected. The former for ever so slight a *mitigation* of the righteously ordained punishment contains in itself an intimation of the *kind*, and receives for answer a hinted explanation of the *end*, of this torment. In the prayer, ver. 24, it exhibited itself as the pain of *deprivation*, connected with a consciousness of guilt (clinging, however, to the slender service once rendered in the crumbs which had been thrown out), but *without* any application to the alone-helping mercy *of God*.[2] The repelling answer, vers. 25, 26, hints at the justice and well-adjusted design of love, in the torments which *for the present* are rigidly fixed. In the second colloquy the

[1] To quote Kleuker (Menschl. Vers. über d. Sohn Gottes, S. 194) once more: "It was not possible that Jesus should assume, for its own sake, a mien of mystery, or aim to create a mere vacant astonishment, or use the tone of affected lamentation: for He spoke out of His own nature, even as Æsop did when he made his lions, asses, nightingales, and trees speak; and it was not His aim to make proselytes to *faith* by prodigies exhibited to the eye, any more than by those uttered to the ear."

[2] It is only the addition of this third which makes the pains of hell: the two former had been experienced both by Lazarus and the prodigal.

ground of guiltiness is referred to:—the request for *extraordinary revelation* to his brethren (which hardly conceals his own stiff-necked apology for himself as having lacked it) is rejected with a reference to *the word which was in their hands.* The request of vers. 27, 28 exhibits as well the blindness and obduracy of the offender, as his distinct consideration and reflection upon all things, and even his knowledge of the nature of repentance. The refusing father Abraham must now give two answers, for the colloquy deepens into an objection and contradiction on the part of him who is made wiser in his flames. The *first reply* points generally to the *hearing* and acceptance of that which before Christ had been given to Israel, as sufficing to lead to Abraham's bosom. Ver. 29. But when the *objection*, ver. 30, carries self-justification even to this point, even while its contradiction condemns itself (for in his blindness concerning the saving ordinance of faith there is yet a knowledge of the way of repentance, in which man learns to understand faith), there follows finally the conclusive answer to the whole;—*faith* in order to *repentance*, that alone can preserve the soul from future torment![1] But these two things are intimated: that God's love furnishes the most superabounding means of grace, and that these are in vain to the unbelief which has been before hardened into reprobation. "Hence then, ye Pharisees, be taught by your Abraham, and use that which ye already *have*, from his time down to John, in order that ye may believe the Gospel of the kingdom (ver. 16), and in Him who will rise from the dead!"

Ver. 19. A *rich man:* "such as we *beati possidentes*, whom Thou, poor Messiah, rebukest, because Thou hast nothing Thyself,"—might these bold mockers have thought within themselves, unless our Lord's previous words had humbled them too much. A *rich man:* "as that word is used in the Scriptures from Job's time, with the bad and almost *godless* meaning

[1] How can any one help seeing this, clearly as it stands before us! We protest again and again against the ever-recurring interpretation, that the unjust steward exhibits the "blessedness of charity"—and the rich man "the curse of selfishness."

attached to it in the Psalms and the Proverbs by the rich David and Solomon"—would attentive and observant hearers begin to suspect. A *rich man:* "such as the great Sermon, Luke vi. 24, had denounced a woe upon"—would the Apostles probably and other disciples interpret the words, at once discerning the aim of their Master's discourse. (Matt. xix. 23 had not yet been uttered.) *Ἄνθρωπός τις ἦν πλούσιος*—altogether like ver. 1 before; for all *ἄνθρωποι* are only stewards of One above themselves, the only God, but this one acts the God himself, and as man thinks himself in the place of God. Nullum adest vestigium vel mentio transitus ullius a Pharisæis ad Sadducæos—remarks Bengel quite correctly; but it is equally clear that this Pharisee lives *as a Sadducee*, and consequently the thoughts of his heart are such as will hereafter be discovered to be pure scepticism or *not believing*. He is simply a man of this world, and a sensual lover of the good things of life (*ἐτρυφήσατε ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐσπαταλήσατε*, Jas. v. 5), knowing nothing about administering God's goods as a *steward;* he makes good living the end of life, his heart is altogether immersed in its pomp and luxuriance, and hence there is nothing more just at this point to be said concerning him. The vain preeminence of apparel is first mentioned, for this with eating and drinking is the heathenish ambition of his mammon; and his one great care is to carry both to the loftiest pitch *in the sight of men*, as if for his own precious soul. That feeds with the swine of the earth and is perfectly content; therefore has he every day his merry companions around him (*εὐφραίνεσθαι*, as ch. xv. 23, 29): and it is all *λαμπρῶς* too, so that he does not merely riot, but ostentatiously exhibits his riches and his costly apparel, like King Ahasuerus of old: if his seats are not of gold his vessels are; if his curtains and fringes are not of purple and fine linen, these adorn his own great person. These are all fine strokes in the delineation, each having its significance. The purple was the colouring of a woollen fabric, the byssus or fine linen was weighed against gold by reason of its resplendent whiteness. The combination not only was beautiful (hence they are always united, from Esth. i. 6, viii. 15, with *blue* and *white*, down to Rev. xviii. 12); but it was the emblem of high dignity, so that kings and priests could not outvie this fortunate one, who

though neither of these himself, was a rich man to whom everything was accessible and conceded. It never occurs to his mind to think how many Lazaruses he might have clothed with the price of his sumptuous array. Moreover, he is not a mean and parsimonious man, for he enjoys his substance, parts with it freely, and has open house with grateful guests always round his table; neither is anything said of ἀδικία in the acquisition of his wealth, or of any obvious want of charity or mercilessness; nothing of notorious sins or blasphemy, although he is depicted with accuracy down to his clothing:—so that we may not unnecessarily imagine anything of this kind. Thus he lives and glitters λαμπρῶς in his royal magnificence καθ' ἡμέραν, as if his days would never come to an end, a blind φρονιμώτατος εἰς τὴν γενεὰν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ. The people deem him fortunate and happy: and many look enviously at his palace.[1]

Vers. 20, 21. And now in strongest contrast, in a certain sense (to quote Neander) "serving as a foil to the worldly rich man," we have a pious man "stripped of *all* temporal good" in the profoundest and most abject misery: on both sides there is a description, as the καθ' ἡμέραν previously taught, of a permanent condition and state of mind. But the πτωχός τις has a *name*, for his name alone is written before God and mentioned with honour by Christ—such is the first and most obvious meaning of this most striking designation by name in the middle of a parable. Or might it be implied thereby that in this case the parable actually presents a historical fact? Is the name mentioned by Jesus "as the authentication of an actual incident?" (Roos.) The fathers many of them were of that opinion, and Theophylact found evidence that there was at that time in Jerusalem such a well-known Lazarus. Calvin is very decided on the same side, on the ground that throughout the entire Scriptures we never find a man men-

[1] Professor Weisse doubts not—if we may quote such words—that "this perverse description must be put to the Evangelist's account, who would not lose such an opportunity of venting his spleen against the rich and distinguished in this world!" But where do we find a word about "the rich man being punished *only* for his riches, the poor man rewarded *only* on account of his poverty?" What doctrine can be found here which is "more poor and barren than the coarsest heathen notions of moral retribution after death!!" Would that these worthies would only *read* in the New Testament what they find written there!

tioned by *name* in a *parable;* but this is not sufficient reason to reject that which may be a solitary exception. It is *possible* that Christ may have seen such an occurrence, not merely including the death of both, and the funeral pomp of the one, but even the recorded continuation in the other world which was not hidden from His eye: but it is highly improbable and out of keeping, to suppose that He would single out and make prominent by *name* one case out of many similar constantly occurring, as if it had been a *rare* and *special* event. Further, if the poor Lazarus had been a notorious person, he would scarcely have been found remaining to the end at the gate among the dogs; and the publicity of his name would be opposed to that *obscurity* and *forgotten condition* among men which the Lord evidently intends to mark as the principal feature of his case in this world,—only Himself knowing and mentioning his name prospectively. Finally, if Lazarus must be regarded as a historical personage, much more must the rich man with his *five brethren:* this appearance of reality in the narrative has been seized upon by many, but the truth will be seen when we come to consider ver. 28. Though the Lord might assuredly have sometimes incorporated true histories in His parables (in the higher sense they are all such); yet must we maintain, on the other hand, that in *no* parable did He ever specify any one single circumstance of actuality alone.

This poor man *lay* before the rich man's door, or properly πυλών, that is, the chief entrance and colonnade of his palace: ἐβέβλητο means more exactly that he was *cast down* there (as βέβλημαι is used of the sick, whom their sickness casts down, Matt. viii. 6, 14; Mark vii. 30). Here there is possibly an additional emphasis—He was laid there by the people, who thus discharged themselves of their obligation; pacifying their consciences by placing him at the *rich man's* gate: "Let him behold the poor man as he goes in and out; let him see before his very eyes what kind of people there are in the neighbourhood of his rich house, and *take him in!*" But the rich man did not take the advice of Ecclus. xiv. 13–17, although the misery and end of man was thus daily obtruded before his eyes: it is a plain indication of his guilt that there Lazarus καθ' ἡμέραν *lay* and continued to lie. For it is the permanent condition of the poor man

which is depicted in the parable: not that he was often laid before the gate of the rich man (as von Gerlach says)—but he was thrown there once for all. To lie excluded in the dust before the door of the festal conviviality—that was *his* dwelling: ulcers which he cannot hide, and which invite the dogs,—these were his covering (*full* of sores for ἡλκωμένος), this his costly attire: a craving for crumbs, which at least was never fully satisfied,—this was his banquet! Naked, outcast, forsaken, and hungry, withal in the skin of Job! All this obviously paints only his outward *condition*, but it intimates at the same time his *frame of mind;* and both are exhibited to us in the *symbolical*, therefore not historical but parabolical, *name*. That name is probably a Græcised אֶלְעָזָר,[1] but it also has the sound of לֹא עֵזֶר (Chald. לָא), and thus describes, by its double-meaning, both the external appearance and the inner state of the man so named: before men he is *helpless*, and he is at the same thrown before the gate of His mercy for *God to help*. He now sees afar off the table at which he could not sit, and from which he could not eat:—the converse of what afterwards took place. The learned are still contending whether any crumbs fell from that table for him: but they should reflect that according to the whole cast of the parable the man does not linger a few days and then *die of hunger* (which would have been recorded as the climax of his misery); consequently his ἐπιθυμεῖν must have received *something* to appease it, by which it was only not satisfied even to χορτασθῆναι. Neander is wrong when he says that in his pining hunger he longed *in vain* for a crumb. Many Codices would repeat here the καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐδίδου αὐτῷ from ch. xv. 16 (Vulg. et nemo illi dabat); but that is evidently an uncorrected gloss. It is to be taken for granted that he enjoyed something, though *only* and *hardly* the crumbs which sympathising servants might gather from the leavings of the rich man's table: for it is his habitual condition which is here depicted. He is at least tolerated before the gate, is not cast aside as being in the way; but neither is he lifted up into a better place, where he might

[1] Which is nearer to the form Λάζαρος than אֱלִיעֶזֶר Abraham's servant, to whom many refer the allusion (as the hero of many Jewish tales!)—on the other hand many of the fathers correctly speak, in connection with this parable, of the poor Eleazar.

receive better attendance: the rich man must have seen him just as in hell it was brought to his remembrance, but only with absolute *indifference:* full of himself he troubled himself about no one else. He certainly did not himself send him the crumbs. He did not command the offensive exhibition to be removed out of his way: for nothing availed to carry trouble to the hard heart which was covered with purple and fine linen; warmed indeed with wine, but cold to all sympathy. He did not say, in passing, to any of the people who with alacrity did his bidding —Take this hideous object away! The servants, without any merit of his, threw to him the scanty ψιχίον occasionally; but the meanest kennel of their master was too good for him to be brought under its roof. Then come out to him *the dogs*, which had more than crumbs for their fare (as many a rich lord now-a-days fattens his horses and dogs instead of feeding the poor),[1] supplying the lack of *men:* this is the obvious meaning of this trait of contrast in the picture, and settles the question raised by the critics whether their licking was sympathy or greed, mitigation or exasperation of his pains. *The* dogs, with the article, are not merely animals as opposed to men, the unowned and hungry street-dogs of the East (Ps. lix. 15, 16) who might not only have licked his sores, but done far worse to him; but they belong to the house and establishment of the rich man, as Matt. xv. 27 teaches us that even in the East other dogs had "their masters." These *knew* him, according to the wont of dogs, and their half-friendly, half-instinctive, dog-nature approves itself (unconsciously, of course, in this rebuking *figure*) more full of sympathy than the swine-nature of their lord, thinking of nothing but the trough. Olshausen thinks that their licking the wounds denoted their eagerness and greediness rather than their sympathy, because *dogs* bear in the Old and New Testament a character exclusively evil, and certainly are never used as the symbol of fidelity or even kindness; but to this we reply that they are not said as dogs to be thus sympathetic, but (and let this exquisite touch in the signification not escape us!)

[1] My *practical* theological readers may be supposed to know Pestalozzi's Lienhard und Gertrud. This will remind them of it. That little book does not teach sound dogmatics, but there is much good in it, which they may comprehend and apply better than Pestalozzi himself.

their true Master sends them to His poor Lazarus, because there is no one to bind up and mollify his wounds; just as aforetime He sent the *ravens* to feed the Prophet.[1] "To make his sufferings endurable to Lazarus, it pleased Providence to make the dogs propitious to him: and thus to put men to shame who abandoned him in his misery." (Müralt in a passage to be quoted again.) So that Bengel is not correct here—ἐρχόμενοι, venientes, non Lazari sed suâ causâ, quasi cadaver esset;—and afterwards—dolorem exasperant.[2] For, as dogs solace their own sores, so their licking would mitigate the smart of the wounds of Lazarus. Finally, that our Lord did mean to express alleviation *we* are convinced by the ἀπέλειχον itself; and still more clearly by the decisive ἀλλὰ καί, which would be meaningless if an exacerbation of his pain was intended.[3] The poor abject man cannot drive the dogs away, nor would he, for they do him good; if he could only get *food* enough—that remains his only desire and lack, more humanly expressed than a similar one of the lost son, ch. xv. 16, who even amid his husks thinks still of his former good fare, while he is compelled to discover what does really satisfy and what does not.

Might not this Lazarus, then, be a sinner in this state? Oh yes, for he might have raged and blasphemed in his heart, as it is in Rev. xvi. 9–11; he might have given way to murmuring and envy; he might have *cried aloud* for the help which was due to him while there remained any breath in his body. But all this is denied of him in the narrative; his calm patience, which we all the more are conscious of because it takes no pains to exhibit itself, and into which his wounds and sores have purified the soul which had been rebellious and sinful before, is intimated in that single word ἐπιθυμῶν, which is far from being "almost without specific meaning," and indicates *far more* than the circumstance (as Ebrard thinks) that he failed to get any supply.

[1] Melancthon adduced this parallel.

[2] Gersdorf and many others: they increased the misery of his situation! Stein thinks that this would give the best point of connection for the cessation from his troubles and miseries in ver. 22:—but there was misery enough before, and without this, as we know full well.

[3] How this ἀλλὰ καί designates the dogs "as wretched competitors of the helpless man," I cannot understand, though Lange says it.

He did not, indeed, get enough to supply and assuage his need: but that he only *desired* that partial supply, that he was content to eat it with the dog as with a companion, that he did not envy or condemn the rich man within the house before him, that he did not murmur and send forth his cries, but only sighed out his unsatisfied hunger:—all this is the essential grandeur and glory of this wretched man's character, who lies there with *his sores* (mentioned, at the end, as his only heritage!) a mass of misery, in that profoundest distress which makes death welcome (Ecclus. xli. 1, 2), and of whom it is not once said that he had *desired* deliverance or death. For in his self-abasement, Abraham's bosom was not counted upon so assuredly as it was by the rich man in his blinded pride.

Ver. 22. So much the nearer *to him* was the redemption and consolation which awaited him, and for which he in patience waited: but to the other the torment of want! *But it came to pass:*—by this trivial formula of narration (corresponding to the former—*There was a certain*) is designedly introduced their *dying;* that great transition, and reversal of positions for eternity which is in this great world of confusion daily taking place; of as universal occurrence as the contrast everywhere seen between rich and poor, and which the commerce of the world is constantly rendering more wide, can make it. He who upon earth was number two, nay, the lowest of all in the roll, has now the *precedence*, for his comfort makes haste. The beggar *died*—how do we rejoice in this as the end of all his trial and need! But his sorrow, tribulation, and misery are to come to a blessed and *joyful* end. There follows immediately something transcendently beyond that. What became of his body, from which the stink of corruption already issues; whether there is any one to say—Let us *bury* the body, or whether the corpse is again contumeliously *thrown* anywhere, is not now recorded, for it is no more matter of concernment *to him*. *The essential Lazarus*, who was in that body,—καὶ αὐτόν sublimely recognises a personal immortal continuance of being, according to the simple consensus gentium in human language—is suddenly given to the charge of other hands, and transferred to other regions. He had no brothers upon earth like the rich man, nor had he any friends, nor any mammon with which to make to himself friends; but the *dogs*

give place to the *angels*, who had long ago rejoiced over the repentance, and afterwards over the patience of this sinner, waiting upon it with longing, ministering spirits of the most miserable man who should ever inherit blessedness, and expecting their permission to carry him there. They appear, as it were, attendants and helpers in his real birth into *life*. He who had lain there forsaken, is now *carried*, carefully, tenderly, and with high honour, so that no finger may come too near to the wounds of the soul (corresponding in susceptibility with those of the body), in the moment of their eternal healing. One angel, as Chrysostom preaches, would have been strong enough for this service, but it is the joy and emulation of the angels in common to bring one sinner out of his last prison-house into the wealthy place. They carry him *into Abraham's bosom*, which was most probably already in Christ's time the Jewish designation of the place of the blessed fathers in Hades,[1] since we can hardly suppose that our Lord is here introducing a new designation. As St John lay at the table ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, and the eternal Son Himself, before time began, was εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρός; so shall they that are of faith be blessed with faithful Abraham (Gal. iii. 9), who is called the father of them all, and can receive them into everlasting habitations. (Hence ver. 23, ἐν τοῖς κόλποις which at the same time includes the idea of fellowship.) The outcast has the most exalted ministry and fellowship: the abandoned one enjoys the most intimate communion with all the princes of God, in whom Israel boasted. This is very different from lying at the gate upon earth, and is even more than only sitting at the table with Abraham, Matt. viii. 11 (which *meal*, moreover, has another reference, and belongs to the βασιλεία upon earth, not to the other world; hence Bengel is inexact when he says—sinus præsupponit convivium; convivium, regnum *cælorum*—for here the discourse is of Hades).

But the rich man *also* died, not merely when his time came as it cometh to all (Job xxi. 23–26), but, as the condensed narrative signifies, only a little afterwards; his death speedily ensued. This Lazarus before his gate was probably the final probation of his life, to try whether such a sight would move him to reflec-

[1] According to Lightfoot בְּחֵיקוֹ שֶׁל אַבְרָהָם was equivalent to Paradise.

tion; or was he the last and only *intercessor* who lengthened his day of grace, for the crumbs' sake, which were imputed to him? Suffice that he *died:* the bitterness of his death is veiled—how under his silken covering he found that medicaments could not save him, how he thought one moment with the heathen king Agag that the bitterness of death was past, and in the next was ruthlessly seized by the unflattering devil and hurried away.[1] And was *buried*—doubtless with great pomp and splendour, which however in vain would conceal his equality with the poor beggar in death; if funeral orations and monumental inscriptions had been in vogue then, in both it would have been said—Here rests one, who is now eating and drinking at a higher table in Abraham's bosom! Such was the last of him; hurried away with such fatal falsehoods in his ears, there soon remains of him upon earth only—There *was* a certain rich man; till that itself, with his name, is forgotten. And is the history ended when we hear that he also *died?* Oh no, as in relation to the dying *and* the being buried, so now there follows yet one more fearful and direful *and.*

Ver. 23. And *in hell,*—that is, in the realm of the dead, in the other world—it was otherwise with both respectively; the happy man is now in torments, the miserable man in Abraham's bosom. And both *immediately,* without any sleep of the soul or any pause of interval—their *dying* is the turning-point of their destiny! A common realm of the dead, in which here first both are found, is intended in this expression; and they who regard ἐν τῷ ᾅδῃ as already equivalent to ἐν βασάνοις, and as the antithesis of κόλπος Ἀβραάμ, do so simply because they do not understand what

[1] A question which may be pretermitted by him whom it offends! In the case of Lazarus the carrying away of the soul by the angels takes place immediately after his dying; in the case of the rich man, the burying comes between the death and the torment. Does this intend *at the same time* to give us a profound intimation that, instead of the being hurried away by the devil of which we spoke, the spirit in the case of the latter still hovers about the corpse and the sepulture, scarcely able to get entirely free, and long shivers before the commencing contrast between the glory and the torment? "It might seem by certain experiences to be established that this is one of the most dreadful sufferings of the sundered spirit of the sinner, to remain by its corpse, and to be constrained to be, as it were, partaker of its dissolution." (Kerner's Blätter aus Prevorst ii. 136.)

ᾅδης or שְׁאוֹל is. The same Lord Jesus Christ who speaks in Matt. xvi. 18 of the gates, and in Rev. i. 18 of the keys of hell, uses the word in both passages according to its well-known signification for all the world; only that He, the conqueror and living one, contemplates dying, death, and the realm of the dead in itself as being part of the dominion of the devil, and as exhibiting the subjection of man to his authority in a prison-house on account of sin. The *necessity* of dying, the being held captive in the realm of death, is the mournful fundamental idea of the expression; and it is very consistent that the Lord should speak concerning Lazarus, already in a place of peace and joy, without mentioning that dreary word; but now, when it is to be taken in its evil side, it comes forth into its own prominence. (Let Bengel's note be understood and carefully noted!) Assuredly we must admit here a transition into the narrower and evil signification of the word (such as necessarily afterwards became universal in the phraseology of Christians); but we cannot admit that it was according to a phraseology then already in use (of which this would be the only instance) which made ᾅδης, by metonymy of the whole for a part, simply equivalent to no less than γεέννα or τάρταρος. A heathen, speaking of the final consolation of a blessed man in the Elysian fields (which also belong to Hades) would have similarly expressed himself; for, as the ἀποθανεῖν of the poor man has in itself a different and more gracious tone than the ἀπέθανε καί of the rich man, so is his place in the region of the dead no longer, as it were, the kingdom and domain of death. Although, for the rest, Grotius is perfectly correct in saying—fuit ἐν ᾅδῃ etiam Lazarus, disterminatis ᾅδου regionibus.

The New Testament, like the Septuagint, derives from heathenism the word, and also its fundamental idea as grounded upon internal consciousness and even external perception (appearances of the dead and insights of the living, which are never wanting in its literature); and thus confirms its identity with the Old Testament שְׁאוֹל. The etymology of the two words remarkably corresponds, notwithstanding apparent difference, and is less uncertain than manifold in its meaning; for they are actually two pregnantly mysterious words adapted to the views of the ancient world with respect to these deep things.

Apart from other baseless subtilties,[1] שְׁאוֹל is, first of all, the unknown place, the undefined *whither* after which man *asks;* but at the same time, in an undertone of meaning, the condition and place of asking and *longing* to those who are found there. Again, as שׁאל signifies to demand, it is the realm which inexorably *requires* the living and is insatiable in its exaction (as Luther says upon Ps. xvi.); but at the same time a reckoning is demanded of those who dwell there (*μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο κρίσις*, Heb. ix. 27) and it is the prison of the true *Inquisition*, of profound and most righteous investigation. Similarly, *ἅδης* bears the well-known general signification of the *unseen* land—"the *no place*, the land of forgetfulness, the region of shadows and unrealities—and at the same time (which is less generally recognised) the land *where no man can see anything* (the lifting up of the eyes and seeing, in our parable, in one sense is consistent with this, in another, forms a contrast), a land of obscurity in opposition to the light of the living, the life of shadows, the "twilight of severed existence"—and thus, finally, it is the place whence there is no *prospect* or hope of return.[2] The old theologians had a much better accquaintance with the nature of Sheol than the more modern: though sounder views are beginning now to be admitted in the place of the rash and hasty negative dogmatics of the Reformers.[3]

Abraham himself, in this general sense, is in Sheol, like Jacob and Joseph, Gen. xxxvii. 35; and Samuel also is there where Saul cometh *to him*, 1 Sam. xxviii. 19. *Καὶ ἐν τῷ ἅδῃ* is the general antithesis to their earthly life, the lifting up of the curtain upon the scene beyond; if this had itself signified—"in

[1] Of which we only mention Kanne's derivation from a root cognate with שׁלה, the place of rest and stillness, Ps. xciv. 17, cxv. 17) which says too little and is too gentle); and then Gesenius—tandem indagasse sibi videtur שְׁעוֹל, cavitas,—which is too external and local, and, properly speaking, without any contents. Or it must be regarded as remaining ever hollow, never full, as an insatiable abyss, Prov. xxvii. 20, xxx. 16.

[2] See v. Meyer's Blätter vi. 229. Other echoes and allusions in the word we now pretermit: see Kerner's Blätter aus Prevorst iii. 93–95.

[3] We may refer especially to three books—von Meyer, Hades. Frankf. 1810 (Salzmann.) Was ist der Tod, Todtenbehältniss u.s w. Strassburg 1810. König die Lehre von Christi Himmelfahrt, Frankf. 1842. Against which de Valenti's Eschatology urges an unfounded and perverted protest.

the place of torments," there would have been evident an abrupt and violent change in the language; and the solemn ἐν βασάνοις, which with its ὑπάρχων first introduces the absolute *issue* of all, would introduce a weakening tautology. But the discourse goes on most simply and lucidly thus:—"And when he, the rich man, had all the honours done to his buried body, how was it with *his soul* which not the less on that account was *there below;* how did he take his place *there? In torments!*"[1] With almost ridiculous force of language and dogmatism de Valenti explains this hell of the rich man to be "a New-Testament description of the place and condition of the eternally damned, such as cannot be interchangeable with the Old Testament Sheol," and thence regards Lazarus as a "New-Testament saint made perfect," and the rich man as an absolute contemner of the Gospel! He wilfully overlooks the fact that the entire parable as a narrative belongs to a period before the death and resurrection of Christ (through which first the Old-Testament Sheol lost its sole prerogative); and that, in ver. 29, the revelation given before Christ is appealed to, most decisively and designedly, as already sufficient. Similarly must this period be regarded as before the resurrection of all the dead to their definitive judgment; the discourse consequently refers only to an interval and middle state, just as before the habitations or *tabernacles*, albeit eternal, yet as tabernacles referred to an interim. The detailed exposition of all that follows will variously and decisively confirm this view. Nor can we derive from it the notion that there is a torment of the wicked which falls short of eternal condemnation; according to the sentiment of one who has been "taught by a continual study of the Scriptures, and reflection upon the Divine nature, to think, or at least to hope (!) that the Divine righteousness would never affix to the transitory errors and failings of this short life, the doom of eternal woe."[2] There is,

[1] Thus there is no ground for Hengstenberg's assertion (Ev. Kirchenz. 1849. ss.) that the word Hades is used in the New Testament only with reference to departed sinners. In Acts ii. 27–31 the Old-Testament phrase is recognised and affirmed; and, further, Rev. xx. 13 means the realm of the dead simply, as is plain from ver. 12.

[2] As Rössler of Merseburg publicly expounded this parable, and, at the wish of very respectable people, printed his sermon.

indeed, a κόλασις αἰώνιος which no investigation of Scripture, and no reflection upon the righteousness of God, can explain away; but *that* is not the subject of the discourse which we now expound.

The sometime rich man is regarded as being, in the first transition and on his first entrance into this place, dark and involved in self; but there immediately ensues a *lifting up of his eyes*, a contemplation and pondering of the condition in which he now is,[1] and that not induced by desire or curiosity, but enforced by *torment*:—it is this which drives him to the first involuntary perception of the horror of his condition. Every lexicon will tell us that βάσανος in its original and fundamental signification indicates a testing and investigation;[2] and then subordinately the pains which ensue as the tortures which extract confession. If the application of this sense to our passage is declined, on the ground of New Testament usage, we are constrained to admit that there is strong apparent ground for doing so; since βάσανος, Matt. iv. 24, is used for the sufferings of sickness, βασανίζω for the being tormented and suffering without any adjunct idea, in Matt. viii. 6, 29; Luke viii. 28; Matt. xiv. 24; Rev. ix. 5, and βασανισμός for eternal woe, not only in Rev. xviii. 7, 10, 15, but also actually in Rev. xiv. 10, 11. But, on the other hand, it is overlooked that even in the New Testament the fundamental idea of the word is not unrecognized, as the title given to the tormentors, βασανιστής, Matt. xviii. 34, shows; whence Wahl says quite correctly, with reference to this wider application of the term:—tortor quæstionarius, qui interest torturæ, ne adversarius servum ultra modum præscriptum vexet quique testatur de enunciatis a servo pretiumque hujus æstimat, si per tormenta ita læsus est ut domino fieret inutilis. We think, however, that the aim of this torment to work repentance is not so much indicated by this plain, though uncertain and ambiguous term βάσανοι,[3] as by the process of the whole subse-

[1] This only is meant, and not,—as Lange interprets it, one cannot tell why—an *outward* looking, *high* and beyond himself.

[2] Hence it is found simply βάσανον διδόναι τῆς πίστεως or τοῦ πιστὸν εἶναι, to give proof of fidelity.

[3] As Meyer's note: "refining, testing" (and elsewhere "in the furnace of purification"), since the predominant tone of the word is only parallel with ὀδυνῶμαι ver. 24, and ὀδυνᾶσαι ver. 25.

quent colloquy; we must aver that at least there is a slight preliminary allusion in the word which gives an intimation of a torture which may extract an acknowledgment before God, who searcheth the hearts. In this certum *τοῦ* of Hades (ver. 28, *τὸν τόπον τοῦτον*—as Lazarus also experiences an *ἀπενεχθῆναι*), which implies in itself the soul separated from the body, each man comes to *his own* place (Acts i. 25) according to the law of affinity—as he has fitted himself; and according to the law of retribution—as he has deserved: consequently in the case of the unbelievers and earthly-minded *the* torment which commences is self-understood.[1] Now all is over with mockery, a fearful reality and earnest begins! He who probably had scarcely known what want, sorrow, and woe meant, now suffers them all in immeasurable extent in consequence of this sudden *ἐκλείπειν*, this bereavement of every object which could satisfy the desire which still remains; through the removal of everything in which the wretched soul had found its life. "Suppose the case of a child, who, as a punishment, must give up his plaything, with the apprehension of never having it restored, and observe how he cries and laments, how he shrieks and rages as if impaled, while there is no positive woe in the case at all, only a mere deprivation and sacrifice of self-contentment and personal feeling." (Von Meyer.) For the desire remains, the thirst without water, the craving and nothing to supply it. In addition to this, the envious soul beholds others enjoying happiness which it cannot have, and this increases the torment (in various degrees, the lowest of which would be the knowledge of that happiness in others; here, however, it is in higher degree, a kind of beholding it afar off); and there is the misery of being constrained to say—I might have been there too! For, finally, this consciousness gives birth to the direst torment—It is my own fault!

Against that easily-contented and impoverished, not to say wilfully-restricted exposition which allows Neander to say that

[1] Though the text has not the article with *βάσανοι* as with *κόλπος* Ἀβραάμ. Luther's "in *der* qual," in *the* torment, we may interpret as above, but must be on our guard against pressing it to the extreme of Theremin's—"*the* torment, that is, the only torment which deserves the name absolute and eternal torment!"

it is *foreign* to the scope of this parable to give us any clue to the nature of the future life, we have only to quote the honest Val. Herberger—"we have in this parable a veritable window opened into hell, through which we can see what passes there." The Saviour, indeed, does more than merely paint pictures upon the veil; He removes it entirely, as far as *we* with our present eyes are capable of beholding. With all the indefiniteness, figurative character, and enigmas of the delineation, we have declarations and solutions enough in its few words. They teach us of a passing over of the dying just as they are, with their consciousness, sensibility, and memory; an existence independent of the body, yet with thought and sensibility analogous to that pertaining to our incorporation in the body; they reveal to us a *place* of consolation and a place of torment (not merely hell in their own breasts, and the torment of remorse, but a flame!)—both conditions and both abodes are rigidly defined and sundered, and yet not utterly without communion; finally, that the lot of the miserable is most decisively apportioned, yet not at once and as yet unalterable. In the broad, common region colloquies are possible to both; this is here only intimated to us in Scripture, but, notwithstanding the parabolical nature of the whole, we cannot but think that the conversation held must correspond to something possible, actual, and real. We must attribute it to the eschatological dimness of the evangelical fathers of our church, who had too much to do with the πρώτοις to see far into the distance of truth, that Luther and others following him, could so rationistically say—"this whole conversation passed in the *conscience*, even Abraham's rejoinder was only the voice of an *accusing conscience*—Oh that I had believed!"[1] Strange indeed would it be, if this instruction could come to the ignorant man in such a fashion out of himself, his condition and its influence identical! Thus the Lord assuredly goes on to speak of an actual *Lazarus*, whom the rich man now sees and recognises because he had seen him on earth (by no means merely *thought* that he would certainly be in Abraham's bosom); and with equal certainty the person and voice of Abraham is not merely an imagination of the tormented man. How this *speaking* could take place in that state,

[1] To which von Gerlach gives his adhesion.

how far its figurativeness is to extend, we know as little and suspect as much, as will be seen hereafter in the elucidation of the finger and the tongue.

Ver. 24. Instead of truly *returning into himself*, like the prodigal son, and thus finding his own heart so as to *call upon* his *God*,[1] he turns, with a persistence in his ancient tendency, to that which his eyes behold though only from afar. His punishment is his woe, and not his sin: he prays not for mercy, but for water. The "*have mercy on me*" was well in itself, but not addressed to the right father. That which had been in life the ground of his presumptuous confidence (See Lu. iii. 8), is the starting-point of his cry now: thrice does he cry and appeal with a vain—*father Abraham!* against which, if he had hearkened to the prophets, Isa. lxiii. 16 would have been an effectual protest. Thus he furnishes the one solitary scriptural example of the invocation of a saint, and that a very discouraging one. (Job. v. 1.) Although he sees only from afar, ἀπὸ μάκροθεν ὁρᾷ, he discerns and knows Abraham in the midst of his company, and among them even Lazarus himself. The truth which is thus clothed in a parabolical vesture gives us sufficing assurance that in the next world there will be a knowledge, that is a *recognition*, of others' persons. Whether he had asked and heard and thus known how the beggar was named upon earth, is a point not decided by this: the naming is more probably the parabolical method of conveying the recognition of his person. Why, then, should father Abraham send this Lazarus and no other? Bengel thinks—adhuc vilipendit Lazarum herus, deeming him good enough to be sent on such a mission; and Lange even discerns in this "the most refined and subtile master-trait of the whole parable, that the rich man should treat Lazarus in the spirit of an *unconscious* continuation of his old earthly assumption and prerogative." He thinks that "he regards him still as a born servant of the rich—and grudges him his rest even in Abraham's bosom!"

[1] For that he absolutely *could* no more do this, because God was to him already in his final torment a consuming fire, is fundamentally untrue: applying the orthodox standard improperly. He *cannot* do so *yet*,—that is certainly true; nevertheless, he is supposed to be capable of calling upon God, and probably did in the end.

For our part we regard all this as not merely too finely drawn and far-fetched, but as utterly false. Has not the rich man been by this time constrained to acknowledge that high honour and dignity in which he now beholds Lazarus? Can we call it scornful treatment to desire from his finger one drop of mercy? We take the answer to be two-fold :—It is because he *knows* this man and can point him out; *and then also*, it may be, because he had lain before his door, and had received an occasional crumb from his table. This latter supposition would, indeed, indicate the obstinate pertinacity of human nature in clinging to the slightest straw of merit: be that as it may, it shows supplementarily that Lazarus had not been altogether unobserved by the rich man. Suffice that the rich man is now in his turn a beggar at the gate of him who once begged; and his soul does not loathe to lick the finger which had once been ἡλκωμένος. As Lazarus aforetime in the deep feeling of his abasement only desired the crumbs, so does he now not cry for deliverance, but only for the slightest mitigation of his agony with the tip of his finger; for the conviction of guilt in his conscience (by which he anticipates the judicial sentence of ver. 25), forbids him to ask more.[1] And is there a *tongue* and a *finger* in Hades, as there were eyes before? This is not, indeed, used in the sense of perfect corporeity, for that has been put off; it is not on that account, however, a mere figure, but indicates a certain corresponsive corporeity of the soul, with which it is already and essentially invested as in its etherial garment, and in the analogous after-feeling of which the disembodied (though not altogether unembodied) soul can alone go forth, and be susceptible of its new existence. "The various energies and faculties, which find their outward expression in the hands and feet, and so on, are essentially in the inner corporeity; and the external bodily organs are but the patterns and expressions of that." So says the speculatist in von Meyer; and the excellent father Zeller, otherwise no friend of such speculatists, seems to agree in the sentiment :—"In our corporeal

[1] It is impertinent to say that he still feared any farther touching on the part of the *aforetime* unclean! For now everything is fundamentally changed: Lazarus is now the rich and pure, and the man in torment knows this full well.

life it is not the eye of the body, properly speaking, which sees; but the soul sees through the eye. It is not the bodily tongue which speaks, and so forth. Thus there exists a spiritual capacity of seeing, hearing, speaking, which may find its operation and act without the organs of the earthly-corporeal body." We would add to this that it must assuredly have its operation thus when the soul lives in a disembodied state; and further that it can only be conscious of itself in the analogy of corporeity, since the laid-aside body again to be put on constitutes the formal life of the soul, which can only by this consciousness maintain in continuance during the state of interval its individual personality.[1] As in the heat of fever the mouth and palate are scorched and dried up, so the tormented one feels the raging of the fire on the *tongue;* but this is distinctively mentioned as the ἄκρον of the languishing, thirsting mouth for the touch of the tip of the finger, not without a concomitant, profound allusion to the awful retributive change which has passed upon that organ, once so dainty and luxurious! "That which may be regarded as the tongue of that soul, which had once derived so much enjoyment from it, and now suffers so much misery!" (Kleuker.) After the withdrawal of that mortal draught which had been used, as a wretched succedaneum, to satisfy the desires of the soul, there remains the *internal fire* of the full, unsatisfied and raging thirst of the spirit: and, besides this, and corresponding to it, there is an *external flame*—let the emphasis of the Singular in this expression be carefully noted! It is not that he is "*alone* with his naked, empty, and miserable I; and suffers torment in *the flames* of lusts and passions which he has carried with him;" as he was never left alone upon earth, but always accompanied by the condemning and persuading influence of God, so the same influence now returns upon him in righteousness. In that state all disparities are reconciled, in strong contrast with the inequalities of this present condition of things: the outer and inner world perfectly correspond to one another. Nor must it ever be forgotten that

[1] The condition of those in the realm of the dead "is, indeed, independent of the body; but all the organs of the body, eyes, ears, tongue, *have left behind their traces and operation in the soul*"—the dead "carry with them the fashioning of their former condition." (Oetinger.) Dreams furnish us a mysterious analogy.

in the personal life of the creature the inner world is never to be regarded as if independent of God and His universe as the other factor.[1] The pious Lazarus would have remained undamned in patient endurance even in these *βασάνοις*; but even at Abraham's table the rich man would have been ill at ease, so that its provisions would have only added to his raging fire.—That which he suffers is, indeed, a worse outbreak of an inward poison than all bodily sores upon earth; and because in spite of all his sense of guilt he cannot truly confess and pray, his frightful confession at first is merely—I am tormented *in this flame!* In which is painted the same horror of his inexorable present condition which is afterwards uttered again—in *this place* of torment!

Ver. 25. Brouwer well says: Abest a responsu divitis omnis crudelitas aut injuria; blande miserum hominem alloquitur patriarcha. Not like the ant in the fable, who tells the cricket that he may now dance after having sung so long;—not like the blessed mocking the damned in the Koran;—nor even with that "sorrow of the blessed over the lost" which Klopstock sings of; but Abraham speaks to his wretched, tormented, and imprisoned son in calm and measured words, dignified and well-supported, full of tenderness and fatherly condescension. He does not harshly and concisely reject his petition—This should not and cannot be! but graciously speaks of the ground of rigid justice, of the design of sharp pain; and himself begins to point out and facilitate the topics of his *remembrance*, making this, as it were, his own counter-request. The *τέκνον, μνήσθητι*! which comes first is, indeed, much more gracious than that of Josh. vii. 19—"My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto Him: and tell me now what thou hast done!" For inasmuch as Abraham still continues the father of this unworthy son (Jno. viii. 39), not simply according to the flesh, for that relationship holds good no longer now,[2] but in that

[1] Not as if the immense Not-I had been spun out of the petty I, but the I sprung out of the Not-I existing before it, and ever maintains its relation to it. Alford asks here very excellently: "where lies the limit between inner and outer to the disembodied?" This remark holds good especially in the case of these, while it has its meaning now and universally.

[2] This concedes no such *recognition* of sonship after the flesh, as the supplication appealed to; so that no carnal Jewish hearer might say, as

fulness of love and graciousness which his faith had wrought in him, and which had gone with him into another world,—this "τέκνον" is a manifest parallel with the longsuffering loving-kindness of the true Father in ch. xv. 31. That which thou askest *should* not be granted, in essential justice, ver. 25, nor *can* it be, from external circumstances, ver. 26. But this *therefore* is not rigorously asserted: in its stead there is *besides all this* (ἐπὶ πᾶσι τούτοις), with an almost apologetical tone of grace—And even if we, Lazarus and I, were ever so willing to help you, we *cannot* go over to you! *Remember*, that is, ponder, think within thyself, go on to think as thou hast begun:—for he can do this, since nothing is wanting either to the remembrance of the past, or to the seeing and feeling of the present. This is the more definite end of torment as intimated in the first word—In Hades there is time for this! This μνήσθητι, recordare, of course refers preeminently to the *past* of his vain carnal life, and the guilt contracted there. As we find preparatorily in this world that in old age the memory is very remarkably quickened with respect to the remembrances of youth; so we may suppose that when the roaring cataract of earthly things is still, and the ever-new and ever-shifting scenes of this sensible world disappear for ever, that the internal voice of the soul will be distinctly heard: the voice of that soul which forgets nothing, but preserves all things in the treasury of its essential memory; and that then all will find the truth of the opium-eater's representation, that the whole of the past life may be lived over again, and that all the most petty circumstantialities and the most insignificant occurrences may rise in the most lucid distinctness before the eye of the soul.[1] But on this account we may regard the μνήσθητι as demanding *not merely* such a glance *backward* at the past; but reflection upon this is supposed to go further, and the remem-

the Talmud afterwards,—at least the preputium is not restored, he is called *son* still! Against this supposition the *continuation* of Abraham's words gives ample testimony—son or not, this avails not here, where thou receivest thy due!

[1] This book, "Confessions of an Opium-eater," has appeared in a German translation (by Amalie Winter, Weimar 1840). The author, resting upon his own experience, expresses his conviction that to the human spirit forgetting is a thing impossible, and that the dreaded book of accounts is a man's own soul.

brance becomes pondering and *consideration*, in the full sense of the word; and the νῦν δέ presents forthwith the proper object of that thoughtful and anxious reflection.

"Thou in thy life-time (before this state of death), even down to the burying of thy body, receivedst *thy good things*, that is, all which thou countedst good, and desiredst, and didst adhere to as such—thou didst grow old in the enjoyment of thy days, and never for a moment wert afraid of hell and the grave." (Job xxi. 13.) It is not said—*from God;* for the offender must *think* of that himself, and bring it to mind that his possession in this life was the substance and treasure of God (Ps. xvii. 14): hence it was enough to say—Thou *receivedst*, reflect from whom! This, alas, he had forgotten while in life, albeit he may have often uttered the hypocritical ascription of all to the "blessing of the good God." At the same time ἀπέλαβες τὰ ἀγαθά σου here is quite equivalent to ἀπέχεις τὸν μισθόν σου in Matt. vi. 16. "Likewise Lazarus evil things"—thus concisely by design: for it was not properly *his* evil, and it was in an altogether different sense that he received it—he patiently *accepted* and endured it all. These τὰ ἀγαθά and τὰ κακά in all their complex contrast embrace the abundant matter of consideration which remembrance and reflection would awaken; while to us who hear the parable, these extreme opposites in the allotment of wealth and poverty indicate the diversified distribution of earthly good in all its intermediate degrees within the widest extremes. The expression of this first response sets out with an enigma, which it is for our reflection to solve. It is well with the wicked, and evil with the good—this is a pure contradiction, in which our thought finds it impossible to repose! The solution is at once facilitated by what is immediately added—*in their life-time*, that is, in this world, and not for ever. (Let it be noted, by the way, that this parable protests against the delusion that great distress must necessarily presuppose great guilt; as if a Job is to be compassionated or condemned on account of his boils.) But we ask further: *Wherefore* is it *evil* with the pious man even for a moment before eternity? and then we learn, secondly, that it is only of the seeming appearance of things that the word speaks, and we reflect that external evil is, as the appointment of God, essential good; while good is not in itself evil, except when we

take it to ourselves as *our* good, the evil being the result of our method of receiving it. Abraham himself was rich in his lifetime, the blessed of the Lord; but on receiving God's gifts, he knew better what was true blessedness than Laban did. Hence he can now say to this his son—Curse not now thy former wealth and prosperity: that was in itself good, equally with the evil things of Lazarus which have opened his way to consolation in my bosom. The speculatist before referred to, says: "Every evil, regarded from the right point of view, ceases to be evil. The fool and the wise man, both are a contribution to the great whole. God is just, He is love, order reigns in all His works. Disorder is in us, and has its origin in our lack of true knowledge." On which Meyer remarks: "And since this great disorder so arose at first, God must *restore* all things to their first eternal order again, by seeming disorder, which, however, is the purest consistency." Thus God appoints nothing but good, and hence the ὁμοίως in this most glaring contrast assumes its true importance, the deep meaning of which we must not be hindered from perceiving by the popular German translation *dagegen*, on the other hand.—Thus, humanly speaking, it is *better* to suffer for a while in order to eternal consolation. If once more it is asked—and this introduces the *last* solution of the mystery—wherefore did not the Lord afflict the rich man with sores in his palace, or cause his riches to melt away, in order that he might earlier have learned to reflect? The answer is plain: he *might* not have reflected even then, for *God knoweth the heart*, ver. 15. He distributes his good in the form of good things or evil things, with the highest wisdom and righteousness, according to the need and corresponding disposition of every man, and with the most profound adjustment to every case. The rich man's character of soul required from God that the harder problem of life should be set before *him*—to receive riches and fortune without damage to his soul. If he has solved it wrongly, did not God know that he would have still worse endured the probation and test of Lazarus; and is it not possible that by the bitter contrast of ensuing torment alone he was yet to be won?

"*But now* he is comforted and thou art tormented, as thou seest and feelest; *thus it is*, for *thus it is meet* at the hands of

that God from whom each of you receives the righteous recompense of His justice." (2 Thess. i. 5–7.) Even the Old Testament saints in Sheol (of whom *only* we can think in connection with Lazarus in Abraham's bosom) do not by any means possess *merely* a "painless, pleasureless, and dreary rest in the realms of the dead" (as de Valenti says in direct opposition to the Old Testament), but are graciously *comforted* and quickened and solaced. Abraham *rejoiced* beforehand in the day of Christ (Jno. viii. 56). But in the tormented begins even there already the eternal justice of retribution and compensation: how much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her! (Rev. xviii. 7). Why is this? *Remember*, my son, saith Abraham, think upon it and thou wilt discern that thy present torment is just, and therefore the best thing that God can and will send thee: thus may thy pondering find the right way out of this present into another *future*. "For the νῦν δέ does not constitute an irrevocable and final end, if there is yet left him a μνήσθητι. If a father graciously says to his son under chastisement, "reflect, my son!" there glimmers through all the punishment the distant design of love, and in the very words there is an exhortation to a right return into self, and to an earnest μετανοεῖν. The tormented and so far disinherited man is here dismissed with a warning similarly indefinite with that which the son who was in the midst of his father's possessions heard in the former parable: in both cases a long-suffering and enduring love cries—*Son!* Though repelled and outcast he is not yet entirely abandoned to despair. But will he who heard not in time past, hear now; will he come to reflection who, during a whole life-time, *when it was easier to him*, reflected not? The relation between There and Here is in this case similar to that between repenting in the propitious days of health and amid the pains of sickness: the exceptions of a late repentance are possible, but yet improbable and rare. On the one hand it might be asked: Would not this man,—when he is brought by his own torment, and by the distant sight of another's consolation, to the πείθεσθαι of ver. 31; when it is brought visibly, palpably, and experimentally home to his conviction, that there is a living God, as gracious as he is just, as just as he is gracious,—

become a penitent sinner, in his repentance giving joy to the angels in heaven? On the other hand, this true narrative shows us at the outset, that a fool like this man in his torment, though he may hear *Abraham* at least, and Moses and the prophets too, whom he may and should *remember*, yet hardly hears to receive instruction, contradicts instead of humbly learning, is only at first provoked to pride by "this place of torment," and finds it hard to reflect or moralise in the fire. Suffice that the matter remains *undecided*, and it is the design of Divine wisdom in this record to leave it so:—let us not go beyond that word, and enforce upon it the certainty either of his eternal damnation, or of his final restoration.

Ver. 26. Between *us* and *you*—a sudden multiplication of persons on *both* sides:—"Look around thee once more, after having looked afar off; thou hast also a fellowship of thine own, even as we are in fellowship here. And if I myself would come to thee or to you, *we* cannot!" A χάσμα μέγα between the blessed and the miserable, even in the interim condition of Hades, is *fixed*, which cannot be overleaped, either by presumption on the one hand or sympathy on the other;—that is, obviously, a yawning, profound, bridgeless *interval* of separation. To see and to speak to one another over this profound, remains possible; but while there is this wide latitude among the disembodied hosts, all διαβαίνειν and διαπερᾶν is forbidden: —ὅπως μὴ δύνωνται. Thus the interval between Gehenna and Paradise is not, as in the later Jewish fable, merely a handbreadth (Eisenmenger ii. 315); but there is a χάσμα, which is generally the signature of the τόπος for the disembodied souls, in its vast extent and limitless desolation: just as the heathen speak, using the same expression, of their Hades (see, in Grotius, Hesiod Theogon. v. 740) naming the χάσμα μέγα. Not as if the power of God was unable to fill up even this χάσμα; but it is not in the power of the θέλοντες to pass from the one side to the other; the mere *willing* of "we" or of "you" cannot avail against the fixed necessity of the νῦν δὲ which makes the gulf.[1] One, indeed, as we now know, having risen from the

[1] Neither *wandeln* in a visit, nor *hinüberfahren* in perpetuity—as the German text would intimate: but the original merely strengthens the

dead, passed over this gulf when He descended into hell, and preached to the dead: His mercy opened here a new way. And while the gulf between the believing and the unbelieving upon earth is just as great, the repentance of the heretofore unbeliever makes a bridge over it; and to this Abraham at the same time directs his remembrance:—There *was once* no impassable χάσμα between Lazarus and thee! Hadst thou then gone over to him, in lifting up him out of his misery to thyself![1]

That *he himself* is now tormented he has well known by sad experience from the beginning: nor is he ignorant of the interposed gulf which he is reminded of, since he could not emerge from the flame; and he therefore asked that one should come to him for the mitigation of his woe. His conscience did not permit him even to think of asking for an entire deliverance from it: with all his sense of guilt, *he could not* pray in penitence; and in this we may discern the inward ground of the real permanence of that external gulf. He now resigns himself (half-proudly) to the declaration—"*thou* art tormented," and this is all at present! But a glance upon his fellowship around awakens a new thought within him; one which is good in itself, but which, however, he turns to evil by appending it to something which is not good.

Vers. 27, 28. The undertone of this second, and apparently unselfish request, is in reality a murmuring objection tending to self-justification, which, emboldened by Abraham's words, he now ventures indirectly to urge, preparatorily to the bold *nay* which is confidently thrown out in ver. 30. "Had I but rightly known; had I had sufficient *testimony* that such a place of torment as this, in all its frightful actuality, existed for all

διαβαίνειν by introducing the πέραν into the second verb. Moreover (as König critically remarks) the notions of above and below are not made prominent, κατά is not substituted for διά; for both places are in the lower world.

[1] The ἐστήρικται holds good for the νῦν, now commencing, and not soon to end, but εἰς ἀεί is not added. This expression alone, consequently, does not preclude the supposition that the supplication which followed was the commencement of a better mind (as Alford says); though there are other reasons which oppose it.

who repent not!" "If it is hopeless for me, yet would I pray thee, *father*, for my brethren, also thy sons—this will be a more acceptable request to thy graciousness." He has the clearest consciousness of all which he has left behind in the upper world; he has a perfect remembrance of his growing up, and his brothers in *his father's* house (he names Abraham *father* only, without this personal appropriation);—but he neither knows nor names that third and only true "Father" (chap. xv. 18–20). Müralt, with an otherwise admirably profound penetration into the spirit of the entire parable, has very incorrectly understood this individual point: for he supposes that the rich man is here speaking of God, as their common Father, and of His people or family upon the earth:—this is so unnatural and alien to the narrative as to need no refutation. The father whom he mentions is his natural father, in the same sense as the brethren; and it is all but plainly stated that he no longer lived, when he goes on to say—I *have* five brethren; for this means—I have *yet* (in life, as the soul cannot cease to think according to its habituated manner)—consequently, a father no longer living. Alas, for this father! Where is he now, on this side or on that? Possibly he was happy, and his degenerate son must now remember him with new anguish; he has forgotten to seek for him in Sheol till this moment. Why does he not forthwith ask—send *me!* that I may most fervently and earnestly warn them, as a brother his brethren? In part, because he dares not think of this on account of the conclusion σὺ δὲ ὀδυνᾶσαι; in part, because he has no desire for the yet greater torment of recognition, nor for that short respite, after which the return into his woful confinement would be all the more horrible. But it was with *Lazarus* that he began his former request, and he adheres to Lazarus still: a preacher to his distinguished brethren who would not have been in old time honourable enough; but coming from the dead would invest him with ample dignity, and insure him profound respect. Our feeling revolts against the latent *vilipendere* which has been discerned here, as if he should say—"He who is least among you may surely forsake his high consolation for a while, in order to prevent others from falling into torment." We suppose that as Abraham had said nothing about a gulf between the under and

upper worlds, the petitioner thought nothing would stand in the way of his being sent *thither*. "And although that might not depend upon the will of those who wished it, and not all who *would* go can, yet *thou*, the Prince of the house, and the receiver of the guests at thy table, hast surely the prerogative to *send* him. That he may *testify* to them; that is, not simply that he may give them intelligence of that which they have heard of already, even as I did; but that he may enforce it, and urgently warn them—Believe my testimony, there is awful justice in Hades, the "legends about hell" have their tremendous truth!" O ye soft and sentimental preachers, discharge as sent of God the mission upon which Lazarus was not sent; keep not silence concerning hell and destruction, but testify with becoming earnestness to the earnest realities of that other world!

As it regards the *five* brethren, it is well known that many are disposed to find an allusion here to the five sons of Annas whom Josephus mentions (Antiq. xx. 9, 1); in which case the man in hell might be Caiaphas, the son-in-law of Annas, and therefore the brother of the five. Thus they regard the historical cha racter of the parable as ascertained, and account for the mention of the name of Lazarus,—a most perverse idea! How utterly unlike the constant dignity of our Lord's teaching, would be all such offensive personality as this! and even apart from that, how marvellous would it be that the Lord should record the doom of Caiaphas in hell during his life-time, and include his whole story in the vague ἄνθρωπος δέ τις ἦν πλούσιος! Finally, the death of Caiaphas did not take place before the death, descent into Hades, and resurrection of the Redeemer, and ver. 31 therefore refutes the idea: besides which, it was impossible that our Lord should describe the guilt of *Caiaphas* as consisting in this, that he had been a sensual man, and that—he had not heard Moses and the Prophets. Consequently, the number here is only symbolically significant as in chap. xv. 4, 8, 11. The five with the one are together six, over against whom as the *seventh* Lazarus stands in many respects. This Lazarus, consequently, is not a historical person: at most his name is chosen with some such additional allusion as ver. 31 may disclose. The *brethren* of the rich man are at the same time his true brethren in affinity of disposition and manner of life; so that the preacher may point

his application and say—He has yet many brethren more; Oh hear, hear, all ye whose consciences tell you that you are they'

As it regards the good will of the dead man, that his brothers might not through a sinful impenitent death come into the place where he now is, appearances are deceitful now as they were upon earth. At furthest, we could only detect in it some natural feeling, a certain carnal family-love to the brothers of his own dear self; such, moreover, as would have no value before God, and avail not for himself. They who are disposed to go further, would say with Müralt: "Love belongs to his natural character; and this circumstance makes it plain to us, that the whole is a representation of a meritorious, and not thoroughly wicked, kind of man." But we think that this goes much too far: it is too much to attribute even that softness of good-nature, which would not have others suffer, to a man who could let Lazarus lie suffering before his eyes; and assuredly he knows nothing now of God and God's mercy, of genuine Divine love. *Or* might this Egoist, in the process of his discipline of torment, have learned some little sympathy with others (although, in the *first* beginning of it, he might not even have looked round to see if others were there with himself)? Thus Olshausen thinks that "in this prayer there is clearly expressed a loving remembrance of his brethren, as well as the germ of faith in the compassionate love of God," and not merely as now arising, but as "still remaining in his soul." We doubt whether this is the obvious meaning of the parabolical exhibition in our Lord's intention; and agree with the Berlenb. Bibel (which indeed restores him in the end), that his continued petitioning, instead of reflecting upon the "*but thou!*" which had sounded in his ears, indicates only "the perfect *unrest* and confusion of the condemned man, wherein he is ever seeking something which he never finds, revolving like a wheel in the torment of his *self-will*, torturing and consuming himself." If it was with a view to apologize for himself that he offered the second request, its meaning cannot be pressed beyond a desire to lighten *his own* misery; for if selfishness had brought him into this torment, we can hardly suppose that the beginning of this fire would melt it away. The brethren (whom his influence or example had helped to lead astray) will only increase his torments by their reproaches; or, by their

fellowship, aggravate the frightful contrast with their former reckless fellowship in the merriment of life: for here that saying does not hold good—solamen miseris socios habuisse malorum! This his selfish and prudent prevision is well aware of; and in thus interpreting his thought, we do him only justice, giving him neither too much nor too little.

Ver. 29. Abraham, in his discreet dignity, does not repeat his gracious τέκνον; as the bold and urgent petitioner had repeated his πάτερ. He points the too forward or rather too backward applicant to the already sufficient revelations and means of grace: that is, of course, to those pre-revelations and preparations for the gospel which were mentioned in ver. 16; for this history must be placed in a time previous to its full establishment. Thus does the parable significantly revolve round again into the former condemnation of the impenitent and unbelieving Pharisees: but as their βίαζεσθαι against the kingdom remains unmentioned, it is perfectly free from any tone which might hinder its influence upon its first hearers, the enemies of the Lord Jesus; and it fastens conviction all the more firmly and deeply in their consciences, inasmuch as the cause and the guilt of their last unbelief in His gospel is traced up to an unbelief of earlier origin, and in an earlier object. Abraham speaks as Jesus speaks elsewhere, Jno. v. 39, 45–47, comp. Isa. xxxiv. 16. He places by his instant ἔχουσι, *persons* whom the petitioner very well knows, in opposition to the person whom he asks for:—"They *have* (in a much stronger sense than that in which thou sayest—I *have* five brethren)—they have had hitherto, and still have, without the additional testimony of one returning from the dead, valid witnesses enough! Not only have they *the law and the prophets* in the Scriptures so denominated, but with them they have *Moses* and all the Prophets themselves (who are now here with me), as much as if they were personally living in their midst! For, in their spiritual heritage and use, a witness to the truth continues ever to live, although he be dead: thus *Moses* no less than all the Prophets is a forerunner in the faith (Heb. xi. 24–27), a preacher of life after death (Lu. xx. 37). Let them *hear* these; for faith cometh of the voluntary hearing and acceptance of testimony, and is not the result of seeing manifestations, visions, signs, and wonders. But no man is constrained to believe; for, enforced

repentance is no repentance, faith such as that of the trembling devils is not the faith which renews the fallen nature of man." Should not a people seek unto their God? Should they ask for the living of the dead? (Moses and the Prophets are the living unto God!) Wherefore to the law and to the testimony! According to *this* word, in which there is no wizard deception and no delusion of spirits (as in questioning the dead there may be!) Isa. viii. 19, 20.[1] This *testimony* is sufficient, the wisdom of God is equally displayed in refusing and concealing as in the more abounding revelations. In regard to His Israel, the children of Abraham, the extant revelation of that time was sufficient for the degree of blessedness to be obtained at that time (Abraham's bosom); certainly sufficient for the avoidance of torment. Thus the dogma of the practical sufficiency of the word of God is taught by him who himself before Moses and the Prophets received the simple word of the Almighty in order to his walking before Him in perfectness. As it respects the poor heathen, it remains certain that they *have* no such word, no preachers and witnesses: and for them the request has its force: *send* unto them, —not messengers from Hades, but ambassadors of the kingdom of heaven. (Rom. x. 14, 15.) Yea, even with regard to the blinded Jews, we can scarcely say *now* what held good then—that they have Moses and the Prophets; as far as the being able to hear them goes. Where we can suppose them now to *hear* Moses and the Prophets, they would be sufficient in this day as of old, to lead them to repentance and faith, yea to lead them now to Christ.[2]

Ver. 30. Excited rather than humbled by the protest and reproof which he received (ἀκουσάτωσαν, that is, at the same time,—thou also mightest and shouldst have heard!) he becomes

[1] See the true interpretation of the original text in my "Jesaias, nicht Pseudo-Esaias," S. 239.

[2] Alford's well-meant observation seems to us unfounded:—"This verse furnishes a weighty testimony from the Lord Himself of the sufficiency *then* of the Old Testament Scriptures for the salvation of the Jews. *It is not so now.*" The difference does not lie in a less sufficiency of the Revelation, but in its more clouded and darkened possession. Even now every genuine Israelite becomes a Christian, when Christ presents Himself—or without that attains to salvation in Israel's faith. Christ sees him under his fig-tree, before Philip calls him.

more bold and confident, and his parching tongue throws the οὐχί of his contradiction over the gulf, into father Abraham's face. Very likely he had many times in his life upon earth proudly and contemptuously arrogated to himself "Moses and the Prophets whom we Pharisees hear!" though without ever actually hearing them. Hence he has become so infatuated that he will not rightly receive instruction even now. As the works of the blessed dead follow them, so follow this man his ignorance of the way of salvation, his neglect and practical contempt of the extant word, his self-will and self-vindication, his pertinacious demand of signs and wonders from the mighty hand of God. In his folly he thinks, like many others, that God might regard it as necessary to preach with other lips, and to use other extraordinary and fearful means independent of His own wise ordinance, as if man were not free in order to a free faith; and without understanding that a mightier power than that which the grace of God applies, might be much more likely to quench the smoking flax altogether. "If *one* went unto them from the dead—even though it were not Lazarus:" this is the last and lowered petition which scarcely seems to ask at all, but rather goes on with the self-indicating general assertion—"then would they (properly—will they) repent! without that assuredly not any more than myself, who had not that extraordinary call." Here mark how he takes it for granted, though on grounds only within himself, that for *him* it is altogether too late; and how he utters his own condemnation with his own lips,—even when in the very act of justifying himself and charging God with neglect—making mention of that little word which but seldom in earlier times, and when it would have availed, had passed his lips. He has not been altogether ignorant; thus much at least he has heard, though not with obedience, that all depended upon repentance; and he is constrained to utter this now from the depths of his heart. If thou didst know that, why didst thou not repent? No one comes into torment without having more than once or twice received, both from without and within, the exhortation to repentance (Job xxxiii. 14–18). *Repentance*—that is quite correctly the sum of the law and the prophets, but only the first part or the half of it; hence Abraham, not as the "representative of the law" (according to Olshausen) but as the father of believers, and representa-

tive of the Promise, which was before the law, supplements and completes it by pointing to *faith*.

Ver. 31. He does not indeed say, in the transcendently meek answer which the bold man receives, the great word πιστεύσουσι itself, but πεισθήσονται, which is, however, essentially the same. This latter does not designate, as it might seem, any *persuasion* to be effected by the appearance of the dead (which would, of itself, do no good!) but it means an actual internal principle and living commencement of all true faith in the whole united testimony of Moses and the Prophets—the yielding to and accepting their testimony as a truth which is to be obeyed. The five brethren glory in being believers, but their so-called πιστεύειν is by no means a πεισθῆναι, it has never sprung from or deepened into a πείθεσθαι; just as their already condemned brother had been an "orthodox" Jew, and yet had never believed. Conscience cries loudly in us all, as even in all the heathen—Repent! But when the word of revelation solicits and corroborates this cry of the conscience, it adds the great and preeminent exhortation of its preaching—Believe in Him who, nevertheless, as thy God, is merciful, and graciously speakest with thee, O sinner! The willingness to repent becomes then the *ear* for the right and perfect hearing of this word. Thus, father Abraham himself, whose teaching the rich man possessed through the history of Moses, had borne witness against his folly upon earth by that "faith which was reckoned unto him for righteousness;" and all these things, never altogether unknown to him, would be wakened into vivid remembrance by the μνήσθητι which the tormenting flame suggested. This conversation with Abraham, however, is not to be regarded as bearing only this signification: it is also a parabolical vehicle for the representation of an influence of the Divine word which continues even in that world, of the preaching of the blessed to the miserable over the gulf, about the procedure of which we have no adequate conception. Hence we must simply regard the colloquy as being, what it essentially is, the communication and explanation of solemn truth.

The most weighty final declaration, beyond which the conversation could go no further, is to the effect—that even repentance in itself is not sufficient! As at first repentance itself only proceeds *from* a faith in the severity and truth of the law, so again

does it lead *to* a faith in the promise of grace to which the Prophets especially bear witness, and becomes in the time of fulfilment a repentance for the kingdom of heaven's sake (Mark i. 15), according to the word of John and of Christ. But both hang inseparably together; there is the strictest connection between the preparatory word and that which brings its consummation, between the previous and the subsequent faith, between the ancient testimony and the new superabounding wonders. If they hear not the first, neither will they be convinced of the last, and be brought to true faith. "The true susceptibility for the acceptance of the witnesses of the resurrection must be mediated and produced by a true fidelity in the school of Moses and the Prophets." (Lange.) The warning prediction of a refusal to believe is true in far the greatest number of cases: properly speaking, it is always true, for the apparent exceptions, as in the case of those who were murderers at the Crucifixion and believers at Pentecost, are to be explained by the assumption that in them there was, nevertheless, a preparatory hearing which was not found in the case of others. For those who have not believed the ancient wonders and the ancient words, the new, greatest, and most impressive miracles and words are vain; they who have neglected the right Beginning in God's alphabet will never come to understand the End, unless they are taught by that end to recommence with its first letter. "If thy five brethren are stronger spirits than Moses and the Prophets, they will most assuredly not believe one of the dead;—a phantom from the realm of shadows would assuredly bear but shadowy authority for people, whose souls have more tongue than reflecting reason." (Kleuker.) We would rather say—more tongue than ear! Tyre and Sidon might believe if they received signs and wonders; for they have not yet disordered and beclouded their spiritual apprehension by unbelief in a preparatory word: they have not, through persistent opposition to the truth, through ever learning but never coming to the knowledge of it, rendered themselves unapt to faith, like Jannes and Jambres in Egypt, where Moses himself was in person. (2 Tim. iii. 7, 8.) The *word* itself comes out of the other world speaking of the state beyond; and God's living ones in the scriptures live it and speak with far more emphasis and force than if a spirit visited us from Hades.

This parable which we here *have*, is a most impressive revelation of a spirit:—Lazarus is continuously sent in it to us, serving with his sores to point the world through successive ages to the way of eternal consolation; and has been the means of founding many a Lazaretto, monuments of honour to his own name.

For the rest, Luther's marginal gloss is quite unsound: "here we are *forbidden* to believe hobgoblins and appearances of the dead"—for it does no more than prophecy οὐδὲ πεισθήσονται, assuming this πεισθῆναι to be something good in itself, but by no means declaring the appearance of a departed spirit to be impossible, or an occurrence which never took place. There is, as we have said, no gulf between the earth and Hades, only the concealment of a veil.[1] But inasmuch as we all have assurance enough in the Word concerning the condition of the dead (though not specific charts of their domains, or answers which may gratify curiosity as to how they may employ their tongues and fingers there), nothing more copious or precise would avail to supply the deficiency of man's repentance. It may, indeed, *appear* to be otherwise in the case of some of our own times, for whom magnetism and spiritual noises may appear to have paved the way to faith; but that could have been only a corroboration of the word in which they were not altogether disbelievers, and Abraham's precise and solemn utterance remains unaffected in its simple truth. Did Saul repent, when Samuel, coming from the dead, preached to him the same truth which he had preached to him when living? Have all, or indeed many, of those believed, who have verily persuaded themselves that they have seen such apparitions? What avails, then, "second sight" to those dissolute men of shattered nerves, to whom ordinarily such things occur?

Finally, let it be observed that Abraham in the ἐάν τις ἐκ νεκρῶν actually admits the ἐάν τις of the request;[2] but actually

[1] Of which even the poet can say, "Leicht aufzuritzen ist das Reich der Geister, Sie liegen wartend unter dünner Decke," u. s. w. (Easily entered is the realm of Shades, and thin the veil which hides them from our view.)

[2] And not as Schiller's bold saying represents, "Sechstausend Jahre hat der Tod geschwiegen, Kam je ein Leichnam aus der Gruft gestiegen, Der

going *beyond*, inasmuch as ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῇ is something very different from, and greater than, an apparitional manifestation ἀπὸ νεκρῶν. God *will* even do that, the required sign of Jonah will be given—and to those who have been hitherto unbelieving, it will be given in vain. In this last τίς there lies an intimation which to many of His hearers was even then intelligible, carrying back this entire connected discourse to its beginning again, and revealing that it was the οὗτος of ch. xv. 2, by them rejected and scorned, who should *rise from the dead*. Even before this an actual *Lazarus* rose out of his four days' grave before their very eyes; the name might have been selected, doubtless, with reference to that event,[1] but the main and most important reference is to Christ Himself. Not as if Lazarus here, poor and afflicted, was intended to be a type of Christ, who had not where to lay his head—(according to Vitringa, to whose fancy the sores of Lazarus are the blasphemies and sins of men which he bore; the death of the rich man, the downfall of the Jewish polity; the request for the sending, the vain desire of a Messiah; the five brethren, the Babylonish Jews; the licking of the dogs, the conversion of the Gentiles)—but we shall see presently at the close whom He exhibits as the contrast of the rich man, and may observe now thus much, that Abraham's τίς does omit the person of Lazarus, as he had already fulfilled the request. Suffice that a *resurrection* from the dead did take place and was amply attested, but yet they believed not (see Jno. xi. 53, xii. 9, 10; Matt. xxviii. 11–14); nor was Herod the Sadducee transformed by it into an orthodox Pharisee. Therefore the Lord did not *appear*, when He had risen, to all this people: that would have been still less helpful to their faith than the *testimony* of his resurrection preached to them.[2]

Meldung that von der Vergelterin?" (Six thousand years hath death deep silence kept: Came e'er one back from out the deep abyss, to tell of doom?

[1] Which would, however, require a better foundation than Wieseler's, who (Chronolog. Synops. S. 322) derives it from the circumstance that just at that time the death of him of Bethany had excited these feelings! We confess, for our own part, that we cannot sympathise with such an allusion.

[2] The unbelief of certain people is incurable. "It might have occurred to them, even after death, to endeavour to persuade themselves that there

This Resurrection of Jesus is not a naked argument of immortality in the sense of the Rationalists: that truth needed not such a demonstration, and the rising again of this solitary virtuous Jewish Jesus, seen only by few, would have been but a slender proof; but the manifestation of this Only one before and after His death has its deep root, both as a power and a doctrine in the word of prophecy, torn asunder from which and regarded alone, it loses its significance to the unbeliever in that word. (Comp. v. Meyer's Bibeldeutungen s. 149.) This is once more plainly attested in our parable, as it is attested by the fulfilment in fact of its οὐδὲ πεισθήσονται down to our own day.

The superabounding grace of God even towards the dead, corresponding to the raising up of Jesus for the living; the highest and deepest love of the Son which led Him to descend into Hades to the tormented, to make Himself known even to them; the descent of Christ into hell; constitute a subject of engrossing interest, kept here entirely in the background, but which forces itself nevertheless upon our thoughts. The Living came there to the dead, as here in the upper world the Dead came to the living. But will they who sometime *believed not*, when the longsuffering of God waited (1 Pet. iii. 20)—believe when the Living preaches to them in the realm of the dead? This is the great question. The preaching is recorded, but not their believing in it; thus in this parable, as throughout the entire Scripture, the voice of warning closes all and leaves its echo in our ears.

Have we now fully expounded and sufficiently explained this parable? As a *history* which goes into Hades, using a figurative vehicle for the representation of man's condition there, assuredly we have; but the *parable* is not yet fully exhausted,

was no continuance of life, no hades, no resurrection; as in dreams men hold long conversations, which have no meaning, and exhaust themselves in disputations to which a turn in the bed puts a happy end.—We read in Swedenborg, that many of the separate spirits imagine that they are still in life; and refuse to believe that there are spirits and another world around them." Blätter aus Prevorst iii. 117.

for the first act of it upon earth requires its interpretation. In St Luke we find these three parables united, which seem to be histories and yet are not such. If the good Samaritan has a further and higher allusion, and the figures of the Pharisee and Publican in the temple signify more than the mere delineation of two then existing types and historical examples; most certainly *in this parable* we should not limit ourselves to the mere integument, and, following the common current of exposition, regard it as preaching only about the *externally* rich and poor in this world. It is altogether inadmissible to make the rich man (as Schleiermacher does) "a representative of the house of Herod;" we have discerned in him from the very beginning a *Pharisee*, whose assumed prerogative over the Publicans it was preeminently to hear Moses and the Prophets. But we fall very short of its meaning if we restrict the parable to that allusion; and forget that it has a deeper application to us *Christians*, especially in its *internal* significance! Von Gerlach reminds us that these parables were pointed at the Pharisees, as it were *through the persons of the disciples;* but we are reminded again most emphatically that they were directed also through the Pharisees to all His disciples! For ch. xvi. 1 holds good of *all* our Lord's discourses. We have intimated our view from the outset, as Bengel aptly and concisely expresses it on ver. 19: Dives, exemplar pharisæorum; Lazarus exemplar pauperum *spiritu.* But the Pharisees are of very various kinds and aspects; and are themselves again to be regarded as a symbolical type, going beyond and yet resting upon, the specialities of their relation at that time to the word at that time spoken: just as we learn on another occasion, ch. xviii. 10. We have nowhere found so profound and clear an application of this parable as that given by the repeatedly quoted Müralt, whose work, L'instinct divin recommendé aux hommes, v. Meyer has translated (in the Bl. f. höh. Wahrh. vi.)[1] We may therefore do well to hear him. "This enigma of the buried rich man, unrightly termed wicked, and of Lazarus covered with sores and with contempt, is well worth the attentive notice of all whom we too readily term

[1] The author possesses, as a rarity, the profound psychological treatise of that writer, quoted by Meyer—Lettres sur les Anglois et les Francois.

worthy and estimable people; it is especially intended for them The external riches are a figure of the internal; and the sores, by which the body is purified, signify something analogous in regard to the soul. The most sensible men mistake their friends in this condition, and condemn them instead of comforting them." It is so, alas, and the sad and "specious bye-path of merit," the subtle trust in the excellence and holiness of these their spiritual treasures, is so deceitful, that many in this condition go astray, and mistake even themselves. For it is not the *common* Pharisee alone who is pointed out and warned in this parable, but those who are most eminent also: not only those who luxuriate in art, science, and learning, but also even the proud sitters in our most holy Christian sanctuary. How many a Menkenian, or in its worse form *Collenbuschian* (this will be understood in Wupperthal, and, it may be, elsewhere), clothes himself self-sufficiently in such *priestly* and *royal* attire, looking down upon the poor around who can go no higher than pray for—the forgiveness of sins! In how many a priest, with or without office, breaks out the Pope which, as Luther says, is latent in every man! How many a man has so far declined in his "consecration," that he can only now *enjoy himself* at his own rich table, and laud his own good things to his wondering guests with the most abundant variations of the cherished prayer—"God I thank thee," etc.; forgetting the miserable at his gate, as well as his own wretchedness! Such people have *repented* once, and therefore they are Abraham's children. But they have gradually come to neglect "daily repentance and contrition," till the complete old man emerges out of their regenerate state once more, and now—acts his pride in the garments of a Christian! They *have* indeed whatever may be had, Moses and the Prophets together with Christ and His Apostles, and the Apocalypse which reveals all that may be revealed; but they *hear* no longer what They say, because they deem themselves already so well furnished with everything good. Happy that sinner whose sores break out for his spiritual healing: thrice happy would that proud and rich sinner be if he could become in time a poor Lazarus in God's sight, before his rich garments are torn of and his full table disfurnished for ever! Woe to the converted publican and sinner, if the poison still remaining should break out in the disease

of spiritual pride, and he, too, should become a *rich man*, himself such a Pharisee as those who once despised him![1] These are the voices with which this inexhaustible parable cries out from *both its opposite sides*, for the warning of Christendom: may its expositors and preachers find a better hearing for them than they have done hitherto! It cries *on both sides:*—for, as the unjust steward is first of all exhibited to the Publican-disciples, and yet may be regarded as full of keen application to the Pharisees; so this figurative rich man, though most immediately a mirror for the Pharisees, is full of warning also for the Publicans. If Peter, as the prince of the Apostles, according to the meaning of his successors, had regarded the "hundred-fold houses and lands" responding to his "what shall I have therefore?" as a spoil which he might prematurely acquire in this world and not in the world to come, thus perverting the *servus servorum* into a title of lordship—he might indeed have been the incarnate Pope of this parable; for the papacy is the colossal historical collective-exhibition of the transformation of the poor Christian into the rich Pharisee. As the parable of the steward had obviously for its first intention to warn the converted publicans against a second *punishment* ensuing upon unfaithful administration of worldly good; so this last parable subordinately shows *them, at the same time*, this second punishment as the result of a greater unrighteousness, of *unfaithfulness in much:*—if the true riches entrusted to them must be taken away again as another man's,—all, that is, which they *have* but do not rightly *use*. This is the consummation of that which is hinted at in the well-meant offering himself to hired service on the part of the prodigal son; who exhibited in that a germ of danger which *grace* must take away, or he would become again a proud fulfiller of the law in his father's house. Wherefore, ye disciples, when the Lord speaks to the *Pharisees*, take good heed yourselves lest ye also con-

[1] Compare also Matthes Weyer's ingenious and pregnant oral sayings, which touch the heart of true Christianity (herausgegeben v. Kanne, Nürnb. 1817). There we find—"*In the spiritual carnal life* a man lives in honour and joy, and is clothed in purple, like the rich man. Dying to this higher life of carnality, he becomes poor, hungry, full of sores, sorrow, and tribulation, like the wretched Lazarus."

demn *them* without thinking of the application of His words to yourselves—for so doing ye would become such as those Pharisees yourselves!

THE TRUE FAITH WHICH OVERCOMETH OFFENCES.

(Lu. xvii. 1–10.)

(Matt. xviii. 6, 7, 15, 21, 22, xvii. 20.)

Whether the connection of this with what precedes rests upon historical sequence, or is the result of the Evangelist's selection and arrangement, cannot by us be satisfactorily determined; yet πρὸς τοὺς μαθητάς appears to intimate that it is to be *read* and *understood* in direct union with what has just occurred, while the brief εἶπε δέ without καί or any other definite note, simply says—On another occasion, a little time later.—The article in τὰ σκάνδαλα seems to presuppose something out of which the question of offence suddenly springs into our Lord's discourse; but this may itself be explained variously:—either as referring to some offence which had arisen from previous discourses, of which those which we have heard were made prominent; or as having been occasioned by some specific occurrence which, in a time of such general stumbling, and surrounded by such men as our Lord then saw around Himself, was constantly liable to take place; or, as the simple emphasis of the expression renders most probable, the reference is to those well-known σκάνδαλα which, alas, were certain *to come*, which would *everywhere* be found in the path of His servants, and of which, therefore, He might speak in such absolute terms. It was doubtless in the design of the Evangelist, as being his own first view, that we should regard *the* offences here alluded to as exemplified in the murmuring and mocking Pharisees, who would keep back others from that way of penitence and faith which they would not enter themselves;—just as the rich man in the parable had been a misleader of his brethren (comp. Matt. xxiii. 13 with Lu. xvi. 16). Here we may apply the principle which J. v. Müller lays down for all similar cases,—"Even if the Lord

had uttered these words in another connection, it was doubtless His intention that they should descend to us in this connection too."[1] But we cannot agree with him in declining to apply this to ver. 1, while he asserts it of ver. 5; nor can we think for a moment that the Apostles' prayer for the strengthening of faith was an unconnected fragment inserted here without any specific relation to the context. The *καί* of itself, ver. 5, most manifestly indicates such a connection with the preceding subject. Did the Lord *design* by His words, vers. 1–4, to bring to their consciousness the necessity of a strong, patient, benevolent *faith*, in order to the overcoming of the evil world, and the amendment of erring brethren? If this discourse followed close upon the former parable, the close of which had pointed so strongly to faith, assuredly He did; and in any case we are always justified in regarding our Lord as constantly aiming, in all that he said, at the increase of His disciples' faith. We may easily apprehend that *the Apostles* would so interpret His lesson, and be led by their Master's high requirements to that internal principle without which they could not be met; even though they did not revert to father Abraham's injunction—whose *πείθεσθαι*, indeed, had an entirely different reference, that is, to the saving of their own souls.

Enough: we embrace the contents of the entire colloquy, vers. 1–10, under the one general superscription—*Of the true faith which overcometh offences.* The Lord proceeds first to speak of the *offences;* asserting both that they are in themselves inevitable in this evil world; and further, that the solemn, judicial Woe does not the less on that account rest upon that man, by whom they come. Vers. 1, 2. He then goes on to speak of *truth and love* as the only means of overcoming these offences, by and among His own *disciples.* Vers. 3, 4. The general warning, Take heed to *yourselves!* which is uttered to all who were His disciples, is followed by the specific injunction of *truth* in the rebuking of sin, and of *love* in its forgiveness:—And this latter being the more difficult, is again and more definitely enforced as an indispensable duty in ver. 4. When

[1] Indeed, it is further His will that we should *not merely* thus take them, but that we should proceed from the exemplification then given, to the general truth and its application to ourselves.

the Apostles answer Him by that appropriate petition, which touched the very vitals of the question, He further speaks, as the connection will make evident, of that *true faith*, in the third place, which can alone give birth to such truth and love, in the endurance and forgiveness of evil. Faith in itself lays hold, generally, of the omnipotence of God in order to the victory over offences, makes that possible in God's power, which is humanly impossible; and even a little true faith, if it be consciously and courageously exerted in the matter, is sufficient to that end. Ver. 6. *But*—and this is the subtle, much misapprehended turn given to the whole discourse[1]—inasmuch as it does not avail only to pluck up external trees, which ofttimes simply adds to the offence, but to obviate and prevent *sin* in its *root*, therefore the true faith which in this overcometh is as diffident as it is confident, as humble as it is bold, perceiving and realising both the real need of the world and its own undeservingness, yea, its own absolute worthlessness independently of the grace of God, by which everything good is effected.[2] This is the profound meaning and connection of the *parable* concerning the labouring servant, to whom in strict justice neither thanks nor reward is due for the performance of his bounden duty. In the *application*, ver, 10, the ἀχρεῖοι carries the argument further than the limits of the parable itself; for *we* in the sight of God are without power and worth of our own, in a much more un-

[1] Julius Müller, with many others, denies any connection whatever. On the other hand, C. H. Rieger traces it incorrectly:—The Lord gives it to be understood that many seek a gift which they have not yet humility enough to receive and worthily to use. That would be such an absolute and peremptory refusal of the well-intended and laudable petition of the Apostles as we cannot admit. Lisco, similarly (who mixes up the lunatic of Matt. xvii. with this discourse, moreover assuming it to be identical with that of Matt. xviii.), thinks that the Lord's reply was a rebuke to their unwarranted demand, which referred only to faith in the performance of miracles! No, their request finds a better solution in its connection with vers. 1–4. The same expositor (in his parables) finds in the προσθες a self-complacent reference to the degree of πίστις which they already possessed, and a demand of its increase by way of merit, such as the Lord was constrained to repel;—but all this is unjust to the Apostles, and involves an entire misapprehension of the parable of the servant.

[2] In the other part of His answer the Lord enforces the *purity* of faith. Roos.

conditional and absolute sense than can be predicated of any servant in relation to his master.

Vers. 1, 2. See already, Matt. xviii. 6, 7. Ἀνένδεκτον is like οὐκ ἐνδέχεται, ch. xiii. 33. "It is not otherwise to be expected;" not merely (as Richter and Lange say) it is to be assumed, presupposed;—but the ἐν of the expression points to the thing itself and its persistency; ἐνδέχεται has an impersonal signification—*res* ita admittit, it may be; hence ἐνδεχόμενος is just equivalent to being possible, admissible, feasible. In harmony with this, let not that deeper signification be overlooked—The destruction of the world,—its offences being at once, by power, and without endeavour for its amendment, punished,— is incompatible with the wisdom and love of God. (On the probably spurious τοῦ, see Winer Gramm. § 45, 4). *Happy* is he, therefore, who does *not* take offence at the longsuffering and patience of the Saviour of the world, and who does not himself increase the sum of the offences which are, alas, inevitable; *Woe* also, at the same time, to every individual offender in his own guilt! And δι' οὗ obviously signifies the world in all its individuals who are individually to be judged; as also the indefinite expression (and yet more plainly τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἐκείνῳ, Matt. xviii. 7) itself forms a transition to the little ones of ver. 2, the disciples and brethren, who, as they are not to be offended because weak beginners, so they are themselves to take heed (ver. 3) lest they keep alive the offence by lack of truth or love, and to be careful that they do not themselves make a new offence. We were taught in Matt. xviii. that in the μικροῖς we are not simply to understand actual children, but slight and feeble believers, who yet in their childlike humility, are to be esteemed as great; so that this emphatic τούτων by no means indicates (as Grotius thinks)—in medio fuisse parvulos. We might almost regard this τούτων as immediately following upon ch. xv. 16; and assume that Publicans and sinners, as contrasted with the offence-occasioning Pharisees, and in their commencing weakness of faith, were indicated, as being then present, though without any such allusion it may be explained as a *general*

reference to the μικροί, who (like τὰ σκάνδαλα) were ever present to the Lord, and not without a designed reminiscence of His earlier words in Matt. xviii. 6. Finally, and concurrently with this, it signifies—*These* despised of the world, and lightly treated, so-called *little ones!* For, the impetuous and superficial spirit of censure cries—Wherefore are they so little and so weak, as to take offence at everything? Who can be always taking such thought how he acts towards them? But the Lord, on the contrary, exercises Himself and requires from others, the most solicitous condescension to those who are thus little and weak; He declares every one of them to be as precious and inviolable, as every one who causes their offence is guilty.

Vers. 3, 4. See, once more, Matt. xviii. 15, 21, 22; the "seven times" of which, by Peter deemed sufficient, our Lord now echoes. But the addition τῆς ἡμέρας (certainly genuine in the former clause, if not so certainly in the repetition) most solemnly strengthens and intensifies the number used, just as in the former instance the seventy-times-seven did. In ver. 3 He turns His discourse to the μικροῖς so much offended in this evil world, and gives them the warning προσέχετε ἑαυτοῖς; and this means more than merely—Take heed of these Pharisees and of the wicked world! or even—*Separate yourselves* from them! (as if to fly from the stumbling-blocks and offences; but is not that *impossible?*) This is only the transition from the previous words, and the words which follow adjoin something much broader and deeper. Take heed to *yourselves*:—first, guarding against the causes of offence in the world; and then being cautious not to *take* offence, and that at *brethren*, from whom its ἐλθεῖν is equally ἀνένδεκτον; and, finally, in order that ye may not *give* offence *yourselves*, take heed of the κόσμος and ἄνθρωπος among you! All which we have opened up already on St Matthew. We cannot concur with Olshausen, in making our Lord's keen and searching words distinguish between the malicious σκανδαλίζειν of the Pharisees, and the ἁμαρτάνειν of the brethren springing from infirmity; He rather regards every ἁμαρτία as a σκάνδαλον, which must for the sake of truth be resisted, but also in love, in order that new sin may not rise out of it. We find nothing here of a "*gentle reprehension* and persistent forgiving" (as contrasted with rigorous

severity and abandonment of a sinful brother to his sin, which alone must be guarded against); for ἐπιτίμησον is sharply enough expressed, even in the case of brethren. (We have not here the ἔλεγξον of Matt. xviii. 15, taken from Lev. xix. 17, for this is a different point of view.) If even thy *brother* aggrieves thee with his sin, that is a sad case, but then the principle applies—Suffer not thyself to be offended, offend not thyself! It is not for thee, indeed, to *judge* him (Rom. xiv. 13); but to set him right and amend him in the patient longsuffering of love. (1 Thess. v. 14.) But merely to be patient and keep silence, submitting to it resignedly because he is a brother—that would itself be an offence. The ἀγάπη begins with ἀληθέυειν, and this speaking the truth must be at the outset sufficiently earnest, without any weakness or false kindness of toleration, with rebuke and *threatening* of the *sin*, which otherwise may proceed to a worse extreme! Leave nothing on thy part undone, that may excite him to a true μετανοεῖν! Thou art supposed, indeed, to have already forgiven him in thy heart; but thou must enter into the assured peace of forgiveness with him; no more remembering his sin for reproof, only when he gives assurance of repentance. (Luther misapprehends this in his translation—If he amends himself!) Should we ask further—How am I to know this, not being able to read the heart? then comes in the reason why in the following verse ἐὰν μετανοήσῃ is substituted by its explicit explanation in the simple λέγειν· μετανοῶ. Seven times *in a day* to sin against his brother, and again the seventh time after being six times forgiven, bespeaks not mere infirmity! Nevertheless, thou shalt not refuse thy forgiveness, if he only conquers himself so much as *to say* for the seventh time his μετανοῶ. That does not mean—If after so many sins he gives thee ample proof that he actually repents. The *church* may demand this in the name of the Lord, having a higher prerogative and deeper insight; but thou, an individual brother, must be contented with the apparent and visible ἐπιστρέφειν.[1] But this permits no license or lightness; for if the

[1] The ἐπί σε or πρός σε in the Rec., which the Vulg., Luther, and Meyer retain, is a gloss which is so far correct as it teaches that the ἐπιστρέφειν here is not of itself the undiscernible return to God, the true repentance of the sin!

six times before the seventh should excite suspicion against the μετανοῶ, the seventh return and declaration of repentance is, on the other hand, such a token of self-humiliation as must remove that suspicion. This is not a λέγειν mockingly and carelessly thrown out; nor must we forget that the ἐπιτίμησον on every repetition of offence, and before every repeated ἄφες, will necessarily be more severe. Let it be observed, finally, that the Lord indirectly exhorts also the sinning brother to an humble conversion and confession; He will have His disciples, as brethren, never weary of avowing their faults and praying forgiveness, even as they are never weary of exercising forgiveness. Beautiful picture of a church and its fellowship, as it ever ought to subsist! The lack of *truth* in rebuking and confessing, and still more the lack of rebuking and yet forgiving *love*, is the secret reason of all offences *in the church*, as in the world itself!

The apostles, the Twelve as a body, make answer to this,[1] and we must consider them as remembering their calling to stand before a world full of offences, illustrious examples of such fidelity and of such love; and probably as bearing in mind also what was said to themselves in Matt. xviii. concerning the future church. We may suppose that they were in common deeply penetrated by this hard and severe saying, that they spoke to one another about it, and then that they bring their concerted supplication to the Lord by the mouth of one of their number. and thus the connection becomes so much the plainer. The translation "Increase" presupposes too clear a knowledge on their part, that it was their own existing, albeit weak, faith which was to be intensively increased from within; on the other hand, πρόσθες is spoken of an increase to be added rather from without, though the prayer is not offered with a thorough understanding how that may be. But not the less on that account is this word analogous to that normal saying, Mark ix. 24; since it is only an existing faith which can thus pray for an increase

[1] Actually the only example of such a common appea., thus described, on the part of the Apostles; hence Schleiermacher thought it a suspicious expression, as foreign to the primitive records.

of faith.[1] This believing desire for a greater and stronger faith *is* the grain of mustard seed, which presently plucks up other trees by the roots; and itself grows, if we continue in such desire and prayer, into a strong tree. What a strength of faith is to be presupposed already, in their confiding in the Lord that He could add to them more faith! Indeed, if any man, being an entire unbeliever, should say—*Give* me faith as a free gift and from its very beginning! that would be no more than mockery, responded to throughout the Scriptures by repulsion, as by father Abraham in the other world.

Ver. 6. But the Lord does not repel the request of the apostles; He actually grants it, He does increase or *strengthen* their faith; although He can do this only by first encouraging their confidence in the already existing grain of mustard seed (see upon this at Matt. xvii. 20), and then by abasing in order afterwards to lift them up. When He assures them that even a slight and weak faith is, through its internal principle and energy of life (a grain of *mustard seed*, not a grain of *sand*), strong enough to do great things, if a man only possesses it, holds it fast, and uses it, He thereby contradicts, at the same time, the external προσθεῖναι of their request, and tells them that they had already not received *too little*. Συκάμινος is scarcely the Mulberry tree, which was very rare in that country (though this has been a meaning strenuously attached to this terminus without affix); but it is the expression derived from the Sept. and vulgarly used, though without precision, instead of συκομοραία or συκομορέα, ch. xix. 4. For the Lord is here speaking proverbially of plucking up trees, as in Matt. xvii. of plucking up mountains; the figure is varied here, because *this* tree stood before is eyes. The thick-stemmed Sycamore His, like our oak, wide-branched; and has in consequence strong and deep roots, so that it is significant of something very great, to say to this tree as to that mountain—ἐκριζώθητι. Still more—Again take root, *be planted*, there to remain and grow. And where? Ἐν τῇ

[1] The anonymous writer of Die Evangelien, ihr Geist, ihre Verfasser, und ihr Verhältniss zu einander (Leipz. 1845), regards the Jewish Apostles as saying—Give us *faith* in addition to our legal holiness! And the reply denies to them any faith at all—If ye had it! Woe to the writers of such books full of offence!

θαλάσσῃ; that is, not on its banks, but actually in the sea, the tree is to take root and stand! In the same sea, into which the man with the millstone about his neck, is cast! This is more than sinking mountains in the sea (Matt. xxi. 21), or as when men, having gold as grains of sand, abolish whole hills:—it is a perfect ἀδύνατον in the course of nature, and (as Bengel observes) becomes thereby a type and symbol of the spiritual, supernatural abiding of believers, firm in the tumultuous shifting sea of this world, full as it is of offence and sin. Thus the bidding the *trees* without to be removed and to be planted elsewhere has more immediately to do with external σκάνδαλα, which would be compelled to retire before the *might* of all-powerful faith, if and in such cases as it might be advisable to command them thus: the *love* of enduring faith, which in longsuffering strives to amend the sinner, works still deeper; and it is of that our Lord proceeds to speak further.

Vers. 7–9. The true and perfect *faith* which overcometh the world, is a firm *reliance* upon the *power* of *love*, received from God and by Him implanted in the soul; consequently it is *confidence* in the power, and yet higher confidence in the *humble* power, of love.[1] This lies in the expression *But*, with which our Lord continues His discourse:—loving from the love of God, is more than the laying hold of His Almightiness; it is faith which overcometh, *but* in the humility of enduring love, not as an imperative master, but as a ministering servant. It is the *taking away* of all self-confidence and of all pride which *increases* the faith, thus becoming so much the more pure in its energy. "The lack of faith has its ground preeminently in self-righteousness, in the reliance upon our own merit." (V. Gerlach.) Ye are in all your influence and acting no more than *servants* of God—now how stands among yourselves the relation between servant and Lord? The servant is not at once treated as a master, but must perfectly serve till his time of rest comes; and that is his duty as a servant, for which he is entitled to no praise. *So likewise ye: All those things* which are commanded you, ye must do—that is your *obligation*—and

[1] The power and energy of Christian souls infinitely transcends what the proud song says—"Wo Kraft und Muth in deutschen Seelen flammen!"

in doing all *ye* are, over and above, no more than *unprofitable* servants; that is, ye cannot place God under any obligation, or do Him any service of yourselves; *worthless* in yourselves, God must first give you, and then preserve in you, whatever capability ye possess.

It seems to us a perfectly useless question, to ask whether there was any among the Apostles who had a servant; for ἐξ ὑμῶν addresses them simply as *men* generally. Between τίς and ὅς there is to be supplied, of course, an ἐστί. The discourse does not refer to hired μισθίοις or μισθωτοῖς, to whom Rom. iv. 4 applies, but to servants who, either by birth or purchase, are the personal property of their master, whom he *hath*, or possesses, who could only demand for all their labour their meat and drink, in order that they might be able to perform that labour. In that case, *each* man must unhesitatingly perform the duty devolved on *himself* (τὰ διαταχθέντα, ver. 10); the ploughman not desiring the herdsman's duty, nor the reverse. This is the obvious reason why two are mentioned, the one having a harder, and the other a comparatively easier duty; for the herdsman, especially the careless and idle one, might seem to the ploughman to have an enviable place. Moreover, both these duties taken together symbolise the apostolical office, in which, however, the ἐπισκοπεῖν would seem the more difficult task in comparison of the preparatory toil of the husbandman. It is for you only to perform faithfully and patiently the duty incumbent upon each. Count it not your chief concern to accomplish great things by strong faith, to celebrate glorious victories during a short warfare to be suddenly followed by triumph; but the great point is an *unwearied continuance* through the whole day's labour, fully and righteously measured out. Count not the time long before the rest cometh, or the great reward. Let your faith *patiently* hold fast the word of promise, which the Lord hath given to you His servants—*afterwards* ye also shall eat and drink! This is and must ever be μετὰ ταῦτα, not an εὐθέως; for this antithesis of itself shows that εὐθέως is to be construed with the *following* words, and that to read ἐρεῖ εὐθέως together is incorrect. (Nam sive hoc sive illud herus servo dicit, dicit ei statim, ut ingressus est ex agro. *Cito* cupiunt *accumbere*, qui missis ceteris officiis fidem sibi summam conferri oportere putant. Placent

autem Deo, qui modeste incedunt, nil postulant oganter.) The servant's rest and refreshment come *afterwards*, that is, when he hath done *all;* and more than that, what has is only his food, not obligatory thanks. First must all be wearied done, which the Lord requires! Hast thou all day long ploughed or fed cattle in the *field*, and then comest he, there yet remains an *evening work*, within the house, which ast also be done. Zeller makes an interesting application of is to the "inner world of the heart," in which there is no going right- way to sit down at the table when we come from our exter calling and sphere of labour, but we must gird ourselves, serv the Lord, and prepare ourselves for the time when He will receive us to His supper. We doubt whether just this was intended b the parable. Either we are to limit its interpretation to the ide of obedient service rendered to the very last, as the one point c comparison; or we must regard the day as the whole period c life, the διακονεῖν then being its *concluding work*, that of sanctify ing and finally preparing the soul for the Lord and His table— such a final preparation as follows the external labour of a life, and is the finishing task which consummates obedience and patience. Suffice that while *this* feature of the parable seems to have an indistinct allusion to a deeper meaning, the main point in it comes out in all its distinctness—that when the *day's work* is already done rest does not *immediately* follow, but there is a new girding and serving unto the end. For even in the eating and drinking, the *Lord* comes first, then the *servant;* first the master's δειπνεῖν waited on, then may the servant also—eat and drink. Finally: Doth the master *thank* that servant?[1] Is he *indebted* to him for this, as the one is master, and the other servant? With great condescension, but at the same time with convincing, though gracious abatement of all His servants' pride, this Lord Himself answers by His οὐ δοκῶ, as it were,—This is at least *my* frank thought, can ye assert it to be otherwise? The Lord does not design, in these words, to commend the common practice of men, who, maintaining only strict right in their commerce with one another, as a rule thank not their faithful ser-

[1] The question with μή does not require an *affirmative* answer here; as this rule must not be rigorously applied to the inexact phraseology of the New Testament.

vants; He takes the case as it is, and uses it as a similitude for the illustration of a higher truth which is shadowed forth in it. For the rest, and independently of the parable, it is a matter in itself sufficiently plain, that no *man* ought to regard himself as so absolutely the *master* of any other man; that no man should count his ploughmen and herdsmen as being no more than the field they labour in, and as only to be fed like cattle for his own profit. That the supreme, all-holy Lord, whose absolute property we are, in body and soul, by creation and redemption, does not thus regard His servants, but rather that He does superabundantly both *thank* and *reward* them, has been earlier shown in another parable, chap. xii. 37, which must be taken as the complement of this. But this is here concealed in the background;[1] for, the present parable is obviously dealing with the prerogative and obligations of servants as such.

Ver. 10. As long as we regard our performance, past or present, of that which is *commanded* us, under any delusion of its meritoriousness, such a peremptory declaration as this of our Lord befits our slavish thought:—such only, no more and no less, is the meaning of this rigid and severe sentence, in which we have indeed much to abase us, and the humiliation of which is long necessary. Luther has this marginal gloss:—"Here Christ speaks most simply concerning external works, and in the manner of men"—that is, according to our slavish thought. Elsewhere He graciously calls us not servants but friends (Jno. xv. 14, 15); but this holds good of affectionate and humble children, who know well that He hath chosen them, and ordained them, that they should go and bring forth fruit. And with this the other point of view, concerning the obligatory obedience of Christians as servants, Rom. vi. 16–22, is perfectly consistent. Of this we need constantly to be reminded, on account of our tendency to abuse our freedom in the grace of God (1 Pet. ii. 16); this we ourselves gladly acknowledge as *obedient* children (1 Pet. i. 13, 14); and far on into the Apocalypse

[1] Παρελθὼν ἀνάπεσαι (with which the παρελθων of ch. xii. 37 is parallel) might here be said properly to mean—*Come hither*, and eat with me at your lord's table! This is the prerogative of the children, not of the servants while they remain such. Mensæ servos adhibere manumissionis erat species, as here the jurist Grotius remarks from Ulpian.

"servants of God" remains the title of honour given to the sanctified holy ones before the presence of the supreme Majesty, Rev. i. 1, vii. 3, xix. 5, xxii. 2. *Not* to serve Him, not to perform as our absolute and bounden duty, all which He has commanded us, would entail a Woe (1 Cor. ix. 16), would make us ourselves a shameful *σκάνδαλον*; but the opposite never constitutes a ground of *merit* before the *Lord*. To esteem the words of His mouth beyond what we are bound to do, *mehr denn wir schuldig sind* (as Luther's incorrect translation of Job xxiii. 12 runs), or even in love to perform more than is expressly commanded (as Neander intimates, perverting the whole)—is a matter of absolute impossibility. There are no works of supererogation *in the sight of God*. The fulfilment of the law in love remains ever a debt never to be fully discharged, urging upon us incessant obligations to yet "other commandments." (Rom. xiii. 8, 9.)

Thus, the application goes beyond the analogy and similitude of human things. For a faithful servant is among men *profitable* to his master (Philem. 2 *εὔχρηστος*), and may, by the service of his loving zeal going beyond his absolute duty, deserve his master's *thanks;* yea, even the slave, however rigorously regarded as a mere personal property, is yet a benefit to his owner, so that if his hand should smite him to death he would lose his worth in money, and do himself harm. (Ex. xxi. 21.) Further, we are both to our neighbours and to the world of service, as the salt of the earth, and the light of the world; and so far are *serviceable* to the great and good Master of the house, as being vessels of honour for the purposes of His love. (2 Tim. ii. 21.) But, as soon as the question arises, whether God is indebted to us in any degree, the answer is eternally,—*δοῦλοι ἀχρεῖοί ἐσμεν*. Nothing is to be qualified in this strong expression: it does not signify here *idle, indolent* servants (Syr. quite incorrect אַבְּרָא בְּטִילָא); for, they are regarded as doing all; nor is it merely *abject, lowly,* or *insignificant*. (As the Sept. translation *ἀχρεῖος* for שָׁפָל, 2 Sam. vi. 22, has been strangely adduced, where David will be had in honour of the meaner maid-servants through his own humility.) So also "unworthy" is not enough—as Neander *e.g.* translates. But even as the Lord will in the great judgment cast out the servant who is worthless and unprofitable for the service of His kingdom,

so must *we all* on our part be fully conscious and acknowledge that we never could have been in any sense profitable to God, —that He never needed us, His worthless creatures, but that all which we have was received from Him. The Etymologicum magnum explains ἀχρεῖος simply and well—οὗ μὴ ἔχει τις χρείαν, and so it is betwixt us and God. See the true interpretation in Job xxii. 2, 3, xxxv. 6–8, xli. 11; comp. Ecclus. xviii. 6. For Acts xvii. 25 holds good respecting all that man may present to the great Supreme. Is He then to *thank* us because we did not rise up in rebellion against Himself? Is He under obligation to give us recompense because we yielded up ourselves to be dealt with in mercy, to be saved, to be prepared for all good works, and to be made capable of them?—The Lord does not introduce the servants as saying, under the baseless delusion of presumption—We have been of great service to thee! nor as saying, in the well-grounded truth of an humble avowal—We are far from having done all, much has been lacking! (Ecclus. xviii. 5). He actually allows it to be taken for granted in the ὅταν, that they might have done all; but only to place in their mouths all the more earnest confession of their *obligation*, to convince them that the ὠφείλομεν ποιῆσαι takes all glorying away from the πεποιήκαμεν. For although this πεποιήκαμεν πάντα becomes at length a glorious truth in the saints made perfect, whose sins are all expiated and covered by the δικαιώματα of faith (Rev. xix. 8), yet is this only *by grace* conferred on such as were aforetime *worthless* and *unprofitable*. This is the last and deepest meaning of the words, and in it the truth of the saying, 2 Cor. iii. 5, finds its superabundant justification. Thus was it that the greatest of the Apostles avowed himself ever the chief of sinners; and he that is righteous remembers abidingly his shame. (Job. x. 15.) How many times since the first forgiveness have we all had to cry before God and man—μετανοῶ! How often have we had to urge our πρόσθες ἡμῖν πίστιν in His presence, whose persevering intercession alone has preserved our faith from becoming extinct! chap. xxii. 32. We are only, and never can be more than *vessels;* whatever good is in us for His service, He must first pour into them: as He gives us life freely, so must He give us power to labour. Therefore all the *thanking* must be on *our side*, and our only giving is—to give

God the honour; as the following narrative in the same chapter, vers. 16, 18, shows. And not merely as the eyes of the servants look unto the hand of their masters; but we poor sinners must also, and more than that, wait upon the Lord our God, until that He have *mercy* upon us. (Ps. cxxiii. 2.) But, finally, *these Apostles* themselves, in the complete performance of their apostolical functions, are no other than—the useless and unprofitable servants, sinful men, whom He had made into such successful fishers of men. As every πεποιήκαμεν in *external works* is altogether nothing but sin and shame *against* the true ὠφείλομεν, so this expression of our Lord's, which Stein calls a "genuine Pauline saying," applies—and not merely by an impressive συγκατάβασις *to this* standing-point (as Luther's gloss explains it), but essentially and preeminently, though alas in experience too often overlooked—to all our acting and obedience from *faith itself*. *Faith* is in itself no merit before God, but it is the work of our *receiving*, laying hold of, and retaining the Divine gift and grace—that by which we become profitable *to ourselves*, by which we only meet our most true and profoundest obligation, since to reject the grace of God is the most daring rebellion of His miserable creatures.

THE THANKFUL ONE: THE UNTHANKFUL NINE

(Luke xvii. 14, 17–19.)

We must leave it to the harmonists to settle the chronology of this journey of Jesus, as well as to determine how it stands related, as compared with Jno. xi. 54, Matt. xix. 1, to the end indicated in Lu. xix. 11: suffice that this also *came to pass* in His last journey to Jerusalem. Passing through *the midst*, between Samaria and Galilee, that is, upon the border; as He was *in the way towards* entering a certain village (for lepers were not permitted to be very near the gates), there met Him ten unhappy men, whom misery had united as misery often does those otherwise sundered; even the unclean Samaritan is admitted on the border into their company, and they are all unclean together.

They stood afar off as they were bound to do, *lifting up* with as much vehemence as possible their eager voices (in the case of him who was healed, ver. 15, it became a *loud* voice); they pay Jesus, whom they seem not to have inquired after before, and but little to know now, the honour to term Him ἐπιστάτα, as if they would be His disciples—and ask Him to have mercy upon them! Certainly there is faith enough here for the beginning, if we think upon the saying of that king of Israel, 2 Kings v. 7, although it is but the faith which need constrains. The Lord *saw* less this than the misery itself which troubled Him; and, as the healing of a leper was one of His first miracles after the sermon on the mount, so here, at the end of His career, He heals ten with a single word, without a touch; and, speaking as it were in passing on, does not even say καθαρίσθητι, just as if the matter was self-understood. But all the more on that account He veils the great work of His own honour, and orders all things wisely for all sides:—He prevents all ostentation, exercises their faith through the promise scarcely expressed on the condition of their going (in Matt. viii., on the contrary, the leper was first healed), and gives to the priests now at the last the same testimony of their rights which He had given from the beginning. And it should be observed here as well as there, with what persistency He deferred to the existing ordinances of God even in their deep degradation and perversion, as witnessing against the spirit of separation which would falsely vindicate itself by His example.[1] The plural τοῖς ἱερεῦσι is very appropriate, since while the ten were to go at first in a body, afterwards every one was to go to his individual priest, not all together in a too imposing body. And was the Samaritan to go to his

[1] Schlatter pointed a good application (see his sermon in Brandt's Magazine i. 2): "From the *law* upon this subject we must perceive that this requisition to show themselves to the priests would redound to the honour of Jesus; not only must His enemies be constrained to admit that the law was not dishonoured or abrogated, but rather vindicated by Him, while its impotence to do anything for the healing of man was established." It is somewhat trifling with the text and weakening its force, to make the expression an assertion which recommends any special direction of souls, as if the Lord could be supposed to *point* these whom He Himself had healed for further counsel and consolation to the clergy (in this case not likely to afford it!).

Samaritan priest? That is a hard question, inasmuch as we need not assume in an unqualified manner that Jesus was supposed to see that one was a Samaritan.[1] In the first edition I gave my decision (with Tertullian) that Jesus would direct the Samaritan also to the only recognised true priests, τοῖς ἱερεῦσι, then in Israel; but I am now doubtful on this point, and can scarcely be content with that view. It might be said—why should He not in such a *difficult case* (and it may be presumed that the Lord penetrated the subject as such), without further entering into the matter, allow the Samaritan ordinance to pass as valid for this occasion? Why take such an occasion to institute an objection against the theocratical constitution which the Samaritans in some sense thought they retained? (Comp. Sepp ii. 454.) To direct the poor man to the *Jewish* priests would not only have been highly paradoxical, but severe to the man himself, since he would be sure to meet with only an unfriendly reception;[2] and that would have been *contrary to order*, implying a *reforming* tendency in such matters as our Lord never elsewhere interfered with. Let the reader consider both, and decide for himself!

As they went they were cleansed, even as it is with us when we walk in the path of obedience, if our faith lays hold upon the not instantly fulfilled promise. Thus all these ten have believingly laid hold on this gracious word; they entertain no Naaman-objection fatal to their own hopes; and therefore it is done to them presently according to their faith. The thankful one had not yet gone far, as the history evidently shows, connecting with the ὑπάγειν of the beginning the immediate ἰδὼν ὅτι ἰάθη with an instant ὑπέστρεψε. The whole narrative is set before us with the consecutive clearness of the report of an eye-witness. Thus the man was yet so near that as soon as the ἐκαθαρίσθησαν became visible and felt in his whole being, a matter of indubitable certainty, he could at once turn back to Jesus. Those

[1] As Neander thinks, that Jesus "took this occasion" to counteract the Jewish prejudice against the Samaritans.

[2] For to say with the good Roos—"the care of God over him would provide that he should be admitted into the temple," where no Samaritan might ever go—is altogether to forget our Lord's systematic principles of propriety.

who suppose that he had been by this time to the priest,[1] forget that the brief narrative with its double καὶ ἐγένετο would be marvellously protracted, and that they must keep the Lord standing before the entrance of the village during the whole time. And the entire tone of the record precludes the supposition of v. Gerlach that the Samaritan had gone on with the rest to Jerusalem, and, afterwards returning, had met Jesus in the neighbourhood of the city. Yet how often is this notion enforced in our sermons on the subject! We are convinced that the *turning back* was the instant result of the thankfulness which carried away his feelings, and that the others with colder hearts went on as they were bidden.[2] We might, indeed, find some sort of apology for them in this commandment of the Lord which they so punctually obeyed; but the Lord looks deeper, and values *this* obedience but lightly. He also regards the occurrence as having a *typical* significance. He beholds in these nine, contrasted with the one, the thanklessness of men as a whole. He sees in them the ingratitude of heart which many whom He had before healed had manifested, never having yet learned to glorify God; and regards this incident but as a prophetic type of what will also ever take place. Gratitude is the "beginning, middle, and end of all true human morals," or rather devotion (see Heb. xii. 28 rightly translated); ingratitude is the origin of all heathenism according to Rom. i. 21, and the root of all apostasy in Israel according to Deut. xxxii. 6. All true thankfulness goes straight up to God, even while, as this honest Samaritan shows, it does not forget the person of its helper and benefactor; hence also the Lord, Himself as the Son meekly giving the honour to His Father, makes prominent this very δοῦναι δόξαν τῷ θεῷ. This is what He everywhere seeks, desirous everywhere to find it; hence the εὑρέθησαν. Not as if He was eager to re-

[1] Especially Schleiermacher, and on the strange ground, that "a leper, in exceedingly few instances, was in a situation to judge himself whether he was clean." Then here might be one of those few instances.

[2] The Berlenb. Bibel even supposes that the priests might have restrained them from returning, but that the one leper overcame the impediment. This might do for the nine, but better still to impute to them the cold calculation that there was time enough for thanks, when they might meet Jesus at the feast.

ceive thanks for Himself! As everything may be perverted, so this has been perverted by misunderstanding to imply that the Lord exhorts to the diligent exaction of all thankful obligation, and to the reproof of all ingratitude; whereas the whole history teaches us in brief these two things—to avoid, and to be patient with, ingratitude.

The Lord had counted the *ten*, and knows very well that all had been healed. But He reckons still the unthankful nine, as it were, with some further design: they are still held bound. "How will they appear, when they *must* stand before their benefactor?" His *love* asks after them now, in disquiet because of their sin; just as He will one day as Judge put the fearful question which has not forgotten their ingratitude. He knew beforehand that the ungrateful always abound, and there was nothing in this unexpected; but for the honour of God and the good of men, He seeks and desires man's thankfulness.[1] He thinks, while His glance goes beyond and deeper than this present incident, of the many who have received bodily benefits without acknowledging the gift of God—and further, of those who have enjoyed the baptism of regeneration, have gone away in the peace and consolation of the atonement, but have afterwards forgotten their past sins, and so lived that even the Pharisee's prayer, ch. xviii. 11, would not be true upon their lips. Have they not refused to be found as *turning back?* For here the Lord points impressively to the evil which is prominent in the case of these healed ones; their thought instantly was how most quickly to *go forward*, first to the priests, and then to their homes, and to the occupation which had been suspended by their leprosy:—thus does man's foolish mind ever falsely look forwards, instead of first returning *backwards* into a profound and thankful contemplation of the grace and gift of God. Gratitude is the true turning back of the heart. And is it only this *stranger*,[2] who received his benefit from his chance fellowship with Israelites, and who might easily have thought that he got his healing

[1] Steinmeyer's sermon (Beitr. z. Schriftverst. i. 218) is too refined in making the requirement of gratitude on the part of Jesus an act of humility and self-denial, as it might be among us.

[2] Ἀλλογένης—which expression seems to militate against the usual derivation from an admixture of Israelites and heathens.

merely as included with the rest,—and whose ignorance as to true worship (Jno. iv. 22) might have excused him if he had been wanting in the δοξάζειν τὸν θεόν,—is it only this poor Samaritan, who, albeit Samaritan, is found to be so powerfully moved by gratitude? Here also, again, our Lord points out the true ground of this gratitude and His own saying—thankfulness is infrequent because *humility* is so rare. The faith of the nine looked more at the *power*, and of their theocratic prerogative in it; the Samaritan, on the other hand, apprehended and embraced the compassionate *love*—and his thankfulness overcame all the "restraint of being the only one," and acted quite differently from the rest. We see that there must after all have been something good in Samaria: here and in Jno. iv. our Saviour's parable of the good Samaritan has its justification.

Arise—remain not lying at My feet! *Go thy way* now to the priest, thou wilt carry thy offering with a full heart! Finally, the customary, oft-repeated word—*thy faith hath made thee whole*,—has here a specific emphasis. Has not their faith also made the nine whole; how else were they cleansed? But *thy* faith, thou Samaritan unsound in the faith, is that true and genuine faith which I seek for, and therefore thee alone hath it truly *saved!*

WHEN COMETH THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

(Lu. xvii. 20–37.)

(Matt. xxiv. 23–28, 37–41, 17, 18.)

That these sayings are not merely collected together by St Luke, we shall be surely convinced by a right apprehension of the connection of the whole discourse as delivered by our Lord. But does the sequel down to ch. xviii. 14 continue the connection, as others think? It seems exceedingly probable, inasmuch as ch. xviii. 8 still speaks of the coming of the Son of man; and then the parable, vers. 10–14, returns back to the first secret commencement of the coming of the kingdom of God into the

individual heart, in the already existing separation between the two who come to worship in the temple. But these relations may have been devised by the controlling Spirit with or without the consciousness of the collating Evangelist, the formulæ of connection, ch. xvii. 20 and xviii. 1, 9, not of themselves indicating any strict historical sequence.

With the mocking impatience of unbelief in *Him*, whom they have in their midst but will not hear; of unbelief in the miracles, concerning which the people could testify that when Christ cometh He could do no greater (Jno. vii. 31); and with injurious malice in the guise of docile inquiry, these Pharisees *demand* in bitter irony, and after having already received their answer in a thousand facts:—When cometh this so-called kingdom of God, so long announced as at hand and already come? (The *where* is self-understood—among ourselves!) Because they would have another salvation than that which saved from sin through faith, they regarded the testimonies and appeals which miraculous benefits to the sick so loudly uttered in its behalf, as nothing worth; almost at the end of their time of visitation their eyes yet behold nothing, and they ask in their murmuring—Will it then be soon? When shall we see only its beginning? Certainly we must regard this as the predominant spirit of their question (as formerly in Isa. v. 19), for St Luke concisely mentions *the* Pharisees; although in the case of many it might have more innocently proceeded from that Jewish ignorance generally, which ch. xix. 11, and even Acts i. 3, 6, testify to have been shared, in some degree, by the disciples and Apostles themselves. The Lord's love cannot be embittered, His patience cannot be exhausted: *He answered them*, concisely indeed as became His dignity in despatching their bold and abrupt words, but most profoundly and pertinently giving them the fullest satisfaction of their inquiry. The answer speaks of that which the question referred to, the *beginnings* of its first *coming*, but correctingly refers the "kingdom of God" to something very different from that which the question intended. He might elsewhere, and on another occasion, have said—*Your* kingdom of God, that which ye expect, cometh never! But the coming true kingdom (*His own*, which their taunting unbelief inquired after) is still the same with that which was falsely expected, since

the Divine promise at least lay at the foundation of their hopes, and thence only could they have its terminal designation: His grace brings and offers the true gift for the satisfaction of their erring desire. Let us then be thankful to the wicked Pharisees for so full and good an answer which they procured *for us*, and which may we be able to put to good account for ourselves!

In order to indicate this, the Lord, after His first reply, turns again *to the disciples;* and in a sense blending all together, since in ver. 22 we find that they are dealt with as still, like the Pharisees, overlooking and neglecting the present day of grace. He gives, consequently, on occasion of the Pharisaical question (for the slightest touch causes His doctrine to pour graciously forth in all its fulness, always giving the remedy for that sore need in man which utters the challenge) *a preliminary instruction* to His disciples *concerning the entering in of the kingdom of God.* But by this He does not intend merely its first introduction at the beginning, its essential coming, but also that future full *Revelation* (chap. xix. 11) for which He well knows that the disciples' question waits. Hence His discourse falls into two parts, the second of which gives in preparatory detail, though only by way of intimation, what was afterwards to be brought into full light as the answer to another question of the disciples, in Matt. xxiv. Such is the true relation between this and the later discourse.

Thus we have first the rejection of the falsely-conceived question concerning the kingdom of God then actually present, and allusion to the misunderstood, unobserved beginning with which it comes. *The kingdom of God cometh* (now and always, regarded in its first coming) not with observation and external show—it cometh not thus (in My own person and manifestation), ver. 20; and not as thus come shall it be announced (its true messengers and witnesses after Me shall not thus announce it), ver. 21. But it is, even with reference to these foolish questioners, already present—ἐντὸς ὑμῶν!

Then comes the preparatory instruction to His listening *disciples* (which the docile Pharisees, if such there were, might also hear for their continuous answer) concerning the *future manifestation* of this now hidden kingdom. Here, first, is the general contrast:—the days *will come* which, after these present "days

of the Son of Man" are over, will bring to manifestation *His day;* but this is first future, and then suddenly manifested. Vers. 22–25. Such a day will, in their necessity, be desired *in vain* (first of all as one of the former days); and will be *falsely offered* to a premature satisfaction; nevertheless it will break in —as the lightning at last, but only after a first coming, manifestation, and period of the *suffering Messiah!* This is, at the same time, a perfect *elucidation* of that which had been spoken to the Pharisees, and there now follows for the disciples especially a *closer detail* in the style of prophetic intimation. At the day of the Revelation of the Son of man—which is preceded by similar days of preparation—unexpected *judgment* will break in upon a secure world instead of the expected salvation, as all the previous typical epochs teach (vers. 26–30). Even the *saved* will be able to save themselves only by a perfect devotion and abandonment of all earthly and personal things (vers. 31–33). Finally, the *separation* between the condemned and the saved will become manifest even to the severance between the nearest intimates; for that was *already existing*, though unobserved, at the beginning of His kingdom and reign, vers. 34–36. Does not thus the close go back to the beginning again? And is there not a distinct connection of thought in this perfect solution of their question?

But the blessed disciples are not yet content, and their curiosity *asks further* concerning the *πού* of these things; they then receive *preliminarily*, as the third and briefest portion of the whole discourse, a yet more curt and repelling despatch of their question than even the Pharisees had received:—they are *pointed back* to the whole previous development in order to the judgment, ver. 37. Which utterance now given first, is brought out into its full prominence afterwards in Matt. xxiv.

Vers. 20, 21. Although what the Pharisees term "*the* kingdom of God," and what the Lord so terms, are very distinct, and even placed in opposition, yet the Lord graciously uses the expression common to them both:—not as admitting the validity

of their meaning, but because they rightly hold that which, though as a promise misunderstood, waits for a corresponding fulfilment. *The kingdom of God cometh!* This assurance given in Israel, and indeed to the orthodox in the community, is obviously a confirmation of the great expectation of a kingdom, in its foundation and uncorrupted meaning; comp. chap. iv. 22, where the οἴδαμεν embraces all that was yet pure in the doctrine and knowledge of Israel. The *expectation* is justified (Acts xxiv. 15), the hope of Israel (Acts xxviii. 20) is no delusion; and we ourselves as Christians are referred to a further waiting for the manifestation of Christ and His kingdom. But this προσδέχεσθαι has become altogether false when it degenerates into a παρατηρεῖν, the noting and observing of the eye of sense, the looking out for externally great things and for the setting up of a *kingdom* like the other kingdoms of the world, such as forgets the essential nature of the kingdom *of God*, and what is the true σωτηρία of men through His redeeming mercy. *This* παρατήρησις, the universal expectation and inquiry of the Jews, had frequently come into conflict with our Lord, as we find in the often-mentioned παρατηρεῖν of the Pharisees; and it now finds its full expression in the blind πότε which *overlooks* that which was now present and obvious among them. Thus the answer runs first:—"The kingdom cometh *not* for such observation and espial as yours, not as corresponding to such a lust after externally glorious things, generally not as ye Jews suppose, and quite differently from *your* expectation." But this meaning passes over into one more general, which the μετά, as well as the omission of any ὑμῶν, indicates:—not with any such observable pageantry or even external evidence (παρατήρησις may also signify—id quod observari potest), that men *must* observe it whether they will or not, as if it must make itself noticeable and known like any other βασιλεία. Luther's otherwise excellent rendering "with external features"—"mit aüsserlichen Geberden," does not precisely hit the point, in as far as it expresses this second sense without including the transition from the former out of which it springs, omitting that rejection of all false παρατηρεῖν which we think essentially included. Pity, that we dare not change *such* expressions as these in our people's Bible, else would the double

meaning of "mit Aufsehen" perfectly correspond to the sense. Even the second meaning would be better secured by "augenscheinlich;" for "Geberden" are always external, and with it creeps in the notion of man's appearance, involving the preacher of rumours, the devotee, etc.—whereas Luther's meaning is that the kingdom itself cometh not, doth not increase with external manifestation. The βιάζεσθαι, Matt. xi. 12 (see our exposition), with all its self-demonstration and even violence of entering in, imports less an external exhibition than a loud call, has less to do with seeing than hearing, and has its power in penetrating the inner heart and conscience. For this *kingdom*—thus further develops itself the far-reaching meaning of the great word—is now at the first, and will be for long ages through, as far as it is *coming*, only a concealed preparation for a kingdom which is to be externally manifest; consequently it is not in and for itself any external constitution, any visible church, although it is ever calling out and raising many such; it is no ready *when* and no geographical *where*, it is therefore no *state*, either State-church, or church-State, it is not limited to place or land. "It cannot be marked out on the map," says Roos. The *making a demonstration* and exciting rumour is not its usual rule or essential method, for it cometh not with legal works, nor with externally striking "awakenings, conversions, separations, societies," although all these are connected with it, and, indeed, testimonies of its inner existence.

When it is come, and wherever it is come (this is involved in the continuous οὐδέ), those who shall rightly *speak* of the kingdom of God in its reality, that is, all who better understand this word, and use it more properly than ye, its witnesses and heralds, shall *say* concerning it no ἰδοὺ ὧδε or ἰδοὺ ἐκεῖ: even as I Myself, its first Promulgator, say not of that kingdom which is come in Me—See here, it is Myself; but only intimate to faith—the kingdom of God is already come, it is already among you, and in your midst! Assuredly, on the other hand, *Preaching* has at all times cried Behold! Lo there! (Isa. xl. 9, 10, xli. 27), and the church bears her witness to all ears and to all eyes, with her ὧδε or ἐκεῖ; but the sure and certain substance of this testimony remains ever the preaching of the word:—Where the Gospel of the kingdom is preached in the church, and

through her missions works its way into all the world, there finally comes the kingdom raising up many an overlooked ἐκεῖ to confront the presumptive ὧδε. If *its true messengers* sent forth *should not* or *may not* say—It is here *or* there! so consequently *other men* also, though they might desire to do so in their misunderstanding, *cannot* say so with essential truth. All this lies in the simple and pregnant ἐροῦσι, which excludes every human judgment, according to appearance, concerning the When and the Where of the kingdom of God. Let it be observed here preparatorily:—first the kingdom *cometh*, then it *is* as come actually *present;* where then is the application of the true ἰδού connected with the ἐστίν, which may not be lost sight of? Assuredly in the hearts of believers; yet it *is* not *in us* from the beginning, before its coming to us and in us, for this would contradict this *coming;* least of all could it be already in these Pharisees, who bring their unbelieving πότε to the Lord, and ask the King who has appeared when His kingdom should come! Consequently the ἐντὸς ὑμῶν cannot have this unqualified meaning, but only lead the way to it, as we shall go on to prove at large.

Three statements are consequently to be accurately distinguished in this compressed saying:—the first speaks distinctively of the proper commencement of the *coming;* the second of what *may be said* when it comes, or rather is come; and the third gives, after a twofold repudiation of error, the true information in answer to the question which still remains—Where then cometh it? The first clause refers preeminently to the time of Christ Himself, which already typifies and enfolds every future *coming* of the kingdom in any particular place during this first period "on earth." The "Son of man," or the expected Messiah, the incarnate Son of God, came just as a son of man, that is, not as Israel expected Him, not as the thoughts of all the world would have supposed that He must come. First the still Christmas-eve; then the humble appearing unto Israel after long concealment; then, accompanying all His continuous signs and wonders, and which even these did never remove, the veil and obscuration of His abasement to the lowliness of common humanity, so that, notwithstanding all, He might ever say—Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in Me! Then the Good-Friday with *its* Ecce Homo! (*Lo here!*)

with the question of the earthly vicegerent to the King of truth, turning away from such a kingdom as His with the offence of the cross; then, indeed, the resurrection, but still no manifestation before all the people; and the equally noiseless ascension to heaven; and finally, the *Pentecost*, visibly, indeed, and loudly enough, *saying*—Behold here lives in us the crucified and exalted One! Yet even now, with no "See here! or see there!" in the sense of the Pharisees, but only a *Word*, and in and through that an *inward* influence of the *Spirit!* As long and as often as the world asks, in the sense of the Pharisees, the answer is ever—*Not thus!* The second clause, again, indicates immediately the apostolical period, which is continued onwards through all times to the final Revelation. Assuredly the Apostles, and all their successors, were confirmed by the power of the Spirit, were approved as the witnesses and ambassadors of the kingdom of *God*, by signs and wonders, which attested their preeminence over the powers both of nature and of the world, and which becoming ever more spiritual became ever more real, convincing, and historical; yet there was in them no form nor comeliness, no marks of greatness or glory for the world's eye, any more than in their Master. Even they, scorned and cast out, were πάντων περίψημα ἕως ἄρτι. Paul before king Agrippa and his πολλῇ φαντασίᾳ, bound like his own King; a man who had done nothing worthy of death, and yet is not set free; a preacher of the Truth who, royally in his bonds, wishes for all who *hear* him, to be that which he himself was! The same Paul again in the metropolis of the whole world, a preacher of the kingdom of God in bonds! Peter in *Babylon* instead of Jerusalem, the writer of epistles to the elect pilgrims of the διασπορά, who are partakers of the sufferings of Christ in hope of the glory that should be revealed, who are vilified of the heathen, persecuted by the raging lion, but yet are submissive to all the powers that be—and can he be the prince of the church and the Pope? John also, in the solitary island of Patmos, a companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, receiving the apocalypse in the Spirit, and by the same Spirit testifying to the church from the Lord—Behold He cometh, and every eye *shall* see Him! himself beholding it already—Behold the tabernacle of God! And this ἀποκάλυψις again, what a

σκάνδαλον for the world and for Christendom, apparently bordering on the limits of the apocryphal! Such was the aspect and form of His kingdom at first, and such must it be till the Lord comes again, no longer to rule merely in the midst of His foes, but to make them all His footstool. Till then the Jewish and the heathen world may put their question and *demand* as here, and all the misunderstanding and impatience of Christendom may join them, and the answer here given retains its permanent and deep significance.

Alas how often has the warning of this silencing answer been misunderstood or forgotten; how often have even *Christian men* (as presently ver. 23 prophesies) held out to the παρατήρησις a false gratification; but as soon as, as often as, and wherever it has been said "lo here, or lo there it *is!*" there, on that very account, has been the kingdom of God no more. (For which reason the Lord carefully avoids appending the ἐστίν to this ὧδε ἢ ἐκεῖ in both verses; for it is nothing but a mere ἐροῦσιν ἰδού, which was in the former case at once rejected as worthless by the οὐδέ.) The King seemed to have come at the destruction of Jerusalem, but it was not yet the true coming of His kingdom; Rome succumbed with her majesty before the Cross, persecution ceased, and Constantine gave to the church visibility, peace, and dominion, but all this proved soon to be a false ἰδοὺ ὧδε. Men thought they had the kingdom, and found it a popedom, to which Jer. vii. 4 finds sad application. The reformation erected anew the banner of the *Word* of God, and sang for a while—*He is with us* now in His own way with His Spirit and with His gifts! The kingdom must now abide with us! But has it therefore remained with either Lutheran or Reformed church as such; has it remained in the English mixed church, whose proud "with us!" is contested by a thousand varieties of dissenters, and disproved by a thousand infirmities? Let all this show with what absolute propriety and right the Lord's οὐδὲ ἐροῦσι was spoken, applicable as it is down to our own day. The kingdom of God, we say it once more, for *now* there is need, can absolutely not be any constitution or organisation of external continuance, in the fashion of earthly kingdoms and states; it cannot be any ecclesiastical state, or state-church, or Christian empire,—generally speaking it can be no church as such, although

all these in their shifting forms may serve as instruments and materials for its consummation.

When, where, and how cometh then the kingdom of God? It is, indeed, truly in the world, and has been since Christ hath come. He does not go on to say—*For* it doth not come at all, will never come as a present reality; but a distinctive and conclusive *for* brings with it its own ἰδού, the absolute and only truth of which turns all the others to a lie. What then is this true *saying* in the mouth of Truth, which is to be further affirmed and incessantly testified? He spoke then to the Pharisees—The kingdom of God is ἐντὸς ὑμῶν. To understand this let us begin with the ἐστίν, which as the evident answer to the πότε ἔρχεται must mean—It is already come, already present. Where then, and how, for these Pharisees? Just as it is elsewhere testified to them—Because Christ is come, because He liveth and worketh in their presence and in their midst! Thus the expected time is already come. (Jno. iv. 23, v. 25.) So had the Baptist at the beginning announced to them—μέσος ὑμῶν ἕστηκεν, and the Lord Himself said at the end—ἔτι μικρὸν χρόνον τὸ φῶς ἐν ὑμῖν ἐστι. (Jno. i. 26, xii. 35.) There we have most assuredly the *first* signification of this ἐντός here, as alone, rigidly understood, it can suit the ὑμῶν, to the plainest apprehension. Compare, moreover, Luke vii. 16, ἐν ὑμῖν.[1] That is, as Schleiermacher at first rightly expresses it—"the kingdom of God is being built up in the same sphere as that in which ye also live"—although he then very superficially goes on—"in that of *instruction* and communication." The miserable perversion of *Hegelianism*, which hangs upon this ἐντὸς ὑμῶν the assumption that the kingdom of God is no more no less than something in the interior of every human spirit,[2] is contradicted by all Christendom, by all scripture, by every testimony of the

[1] As also the pertinent parallel expression, which Alford quotes as decisive, in Xenoph. Anab. i. 10, 3, ἀλλὰ καὶ ταύτην ἔσωσαν (οἱ Ἕλληνες) καὶ τἆλλα ὁπόσα ἐντὸς αὐτῶν καὶ χρήματα καὶ ἄνθρωποι ἐγένοντο πάντα ἔσωσαν.

[2] On which seems to border the generally doubtful, often unscriptural Rud. Matthäi, when he maintains: "The kingdom *has been long grounded in the deepest interior of all* men's spirits in all times, although only through Christ it may rise into their *higher consciousness*." Never is it to be testified as an ἐντὸς ὑμῶν till Christ has come to a people, till the preaching and embassage have brought and offered Him.

Divine Spirit. This ὑμῶν rather embraces for the first the Pharisees generally as a basis, then in them the people whose representatives they were; and in these contemplates for its wider meaning the entire of humanity, which might hear the answer when it should put the question: *within*, that is in the midst of, within the circle and among, the Pharisees, the people of Israel, humanity at large, the kingdom of God is set up:—just as Christ then stood in the midst of the questioners lurking around Him. Thus the kingdom is everywhere near at hand, *where men can ask concerning it* because it *has been preached;* it *comes* down really *to us* without any looking for its coming from afar or from heaven, in order that it may be in us; this its coming and presence is only to be sought *within* the domain of ordinary life. But when it thus proffers itself and is *among* us, it will actually come *into* us and there establish itself, and build itself up, *internally* approving and manifesting itself. And this "inwendig" (internal) (by which Luther once more seizes the second meaning without the point of connection with the first from which it springs) can never be regarded as an *erroneous* translation; all the less as ἐντός (which in the only other passage of the New Testament in which it is found, Matt. xxiii. 26, is essentially equivalent to ἔσωθεν) is here evidently opposed to every ἔξωθεν of an observable, visible Here or There. All the saying and pointing, from the ἰδού of the Baptist pointing to the Nazarene (in which the finger of God's Spirit, referring in all the prophets to the great Fulfiller, was, as it were, embodied) down to the witness of heaven and earth around the cross and the sepulchre; and all the ἐντὸς ὑμῶν of the doctrine which filled Jerusalem, of the church which consisted of multitudes saved by the only name of Jesus in their midst, all had been in vain to the unbelieving Jews;—and why? Because *in them* there was no faith which came in seeking and receiving to meet the testimony! Thus have we a *transition* to this other meaning of the expression:—The *kingdom*, as coming, as come, that is, acknowledged (for the question is about that!), consists absolutely in nothing *external* as such; even My Person in the midst of you is nevertheless no better than not there for you, because and in as far as I cannot *in you* bear witness to Myself. If it comes not to that point with you, if *ye* seek not and find not

the kingdom *there*—then is all your questioning, expectancy, and observation vain; ye lose the answer, and that which is actually in your very midst! It *might*, and it *ought*, and it *would* become to you, as generally to all, an ἐντός. Thus (as chap. xvi. 15, ἐν ἀνθρώποις) there is a pregnant *double-meaning* in the concise expression, which our *innerhalb* (yet better the Swiss *innert*), *within*, might reproduce; he who would wilfully reject this, must consider how his exposition, only seizing the one sense, can obtain its foundation for the other. Lange (ii. 2, 1080), for the rest agreeing with what is here advanced, prefers to find the one, proper, simple ground-thought which he supposes the word must have expressed, in the proposition that the kingdom of God generally and everywhere is a matter of the *internal* man, and we cannot contend against him on that point; yet it does not appear to us how the Lord could say this to the Pharisees with an unqualified ἐστίν, without the former meaning as a point of junction for this latter:—It is already secretly present *within* the circle of your position and circumstances, even bearing its own witness *to the inner spirit* of each. Olshausen sees, and states this clearly, when he sums up the progressive declaration which is involved in the three clauses:—"The Lord, in the first place, annihilates their expectations of its glorious manifestation (which were comprehensively expressed by the term παρατήρησις); in the second place, the Saviour withdraws the kingdom of God from the visible world, as it exists in space; and in the last place, He transfers it entirely to the *inner world of spirit*." Thus the *emphasis* falls upon the ἐντός, in connection with which the ὑμῶν must not be especially urged (as Schaubach, Stud. u. Krit. 1845, rightly says)—yet the ὑμῶν is however said, as paving the way for the other deeper meaning. But he who insists upon explaining ὑμῶν by the assumption that ἐντός is *merely* ἐν μέσῳ, must reflect that even then the answer might be taken as a concise *irony*:—It is in your midst, and yet for you it is not come, *for it must first be in you* before you can find it needless to come to Me with your question about the πότε![1] He should consider also, what Olshausen expressly de

[1] "For the kingdom of God is internal among *you*—but because it is not O Pharisee, in *thee*, thou wilt *never* see it!" Dräseke.

clares,[1] "that the Redeemer by no means intends to represent the Pharisees as absolutely excluded from the kingdom of God, but would rather indicate to them the possibility of their entering into the true and spiritual kingdom; that is, if they would stoop to seek it where, by its very nature, it must first manifest itself, in the depths of the inner life." Yes, verily, this is the secret, most heart-piercing, and gracious point of the answer, which otherwise (let the expression be pardoned) would seem to despatch their mocking question in the same style,[2] if it did not just by this *enigmatical* ἐντός direct them to look for its hidden meaning. Now if one of these questioners turned *to his own inner being* to seek the kingdom there, he would find indeed no Christ in his spirit, but the Christ *before him* would then become a Christ *for him*, and that because *in him*. Thus Braune says correctly: "There might coexist with the most unlikely beginnings and most suppressed thoughts and feelings, the possibility of its appearance and entrance," manifesting itself even there, where it excites opposition, and Christ is yet ruling in the midst of His enemies. We would add that even the carrying away, and the involuntary pondering, of the instruction which the Lord gave in His reply, was for *all* these questioners the slight, rudimentary, first ἔρχεσθαι of the βασιλεία *in their inner spirit*.[3]

The question which the Jews still urge, and which, founded upon the good warranty of the promises of the Old Testament, has been developed into an unbelieving delusion as to their accomplishment, runs thus:—*When* will the kingdom at length come? The Christian question which has similarly degenerated, though based upon a similarly good foundation, runs on the other hand:—*Where then* is *it come?* (To which the Lord, ver. 21, at the same time already began to reply.) It is far easier at first to answer the question, *where it is not.* We must pretermit, lest our comment should become preaching, the

[1] Only that we take it cum grano salis, without heresy!

[2] Where is it then? they ask. Ye have had it long enough, He replies.

[3] But when Shaubach discerns in the first meaning of these words "among you" a contradiction to the declaration that it was not local, not ὧδε ἢ ἐκεῖ, he falls into a misapprehension, which we obviated above by the admitted "lo here!" of the preaching and offers of the kingdom, testifying of its coming.

manifold, almost inexhaustible exposition of this—*not here or there!* We testify merely once more as the last thing which the Lord declares—that it is *nevertheless* here *and* there, more and more everywhere upon earth! Where then? Where the Gospel is *preached!* ch. xvi. 16. Thus cometh the kingdom, thus it is come and is ever coming; it is proclaimed and offered at once as already having entered in, and as ever in the act of coming. But only where the *word* is preached with the outpouring and influences of the Holy Spirit, with those operations and energies which have never been suspended since the day of Pentecost, yea, since the beginning of our Lord's own preaching (Heb. ii. 3, 4); for here holds good 1 Cor. iv. 20. "If our Father in heaven giveth *us* (in our human spirit) His *Holy* Spirit, so that we believe in His word and in it live a Divine life"—then cometh the kingdom of God in us. If His ambassadors first receive the Holy Ghost, and then become witnesses for the Lord even to the ends of the earth—then will it come to all who hearken to the Holy Ghost. (Acts i. 6, 8, v. 32.) Where the Spirit is, there is the kingdom; this is its true characteristic in opposition to all externality without the Spirit. (Rom. xiv. 17.) "Its glory is in the *hidden* life of Christians" —and in their word, their confession, their works, and their life. The preaching approves itself to be God's word concerning God's kingdom, in the consciences of all, even of the unbelievers. (2 Cor. iv. 2, v. 11.) It is in strong demonstration of the Spirit and of power, but then it may be said again—See and observe, how *inwardly* in the heart this power of the Spirit lives and works! The kingdom of God *externally* exhibits itself in truth only *as* an internal principle; and all its outward expression and externality is, alas, still mingled with infirmity and baseness, and sometimes concealed amid the specious lies which confess not the truth, but hold it nevertheless in unrighteousness—so that it has never yet been a *kingdom* in the *external* full reality of this word. And if thou askest after *that*, thou must be ever directed from all that is external to that which is within.

Is this, then, always to be the case, and is the kingdom ever coming never to be entirely come, that which is internally prepared never to be externally consummate? Assuredly *it will*, for the preaching of the Gospel and the Spirit witnessing in those

who believe it, testifies it from the beginning to be a *future* kingdom, one which will truly correspond to all παρατήρησις in its even external characteristics—The great and notable day of the Lord must come! (Acts ii. 20.) Of that the Lord goes on to speak.

Vers. 22–25. To the *disciples* He discourses of that future, as to the Pharisees of that which was already present for them. Ἐλεύσονται ἡμέραι, a new antithesis to the heretofore ἐστίν. Nevertheless as that which was spoken to the Pharisees contained what was appropriate to the disciples also, so now in the transition to the disciples the words are so ordered that the Pharisees may receive them too, and ponder what is brought out into sharpest prominence in the first of these verses. For what are *the days of the Son of man?* Most obviously this is first of all a continuous explanation of the indefinite expression which the first answer shaped according to the question had used—*kingdom of God;* consequently it is an avowal and testimony that Jesus would have *His* days (יָמִים, life-time or age, vers. 26, 28; Matt. xi. 12) regarded as the *time of the Messiah*, that is as the introduction of the kingdom of God. I am here, Daniel's Son of man; consequently the kingdom is come. He does not, however, enforce this clearer utterance directly upon the attention of the Pharisees, but meekly turns His words to the disciples, in whom He might presume such faith in His person. Those who would understand by μίαν τῶν ἡμερῶν the beginning already of the day of final manifestation, ver. 26 (as if—Only a dawn at least of that great day), disturb the whole chain of thought, according to which the *now present days* of His bodily presence, in the future vainly *wished back*, are closely connected with the ἐντὸς ὑμῶν ἐστι; and besides a so modest desire of the future of the Lord can scarcely be thought of in any certain sense. The matter, as far as we may understand it, has this bearing:—The disciples and Pharisees will (in a different degree on either side) wish back these lesser, and slighted days of the Son of man—slighted, though in a different way, by both.[1] For those days of distress and perplexity (of that rejection, ver. 25, and of that judgment which will thence follow) which can alone satisfy the signification of ἐλεύσονται ἡμέραι (comp. ch. xxi.

[1] Neander: desire to have Himself only for one day in their midst again.

6, 22, 23), the disciples will desire through their infirmity, that the Bridegroom taken from them were with them again as before; but the Spirit will comfort them and point them *forwards* instead of backwards, will reveal to them the returning "Son of man," as Stephen and John beheld Him, and teach them to wait for that one great, and all-important Day, vers. 24 and 30. But the Pharisees, and the unbelieving Jews generally (with whom the disciples in their weakness of faith are classed), will then discern too late that they have neglected the day of Christ (Jno. viii. 56): they will seek in vain their rejected "Son of man" or Messiah, and find Him not. Thus this saying has a force *for them* like Jno. vii. 33, 34; and seems still to cry out—While ye are spending your time in questionings, I am passing away and the day of grace is going!

Now first ver. 23 turns directly to the disciples: the general interpretation of what is here said may be seen upon Matt. xxiv. 23–27. Let not your longing for Me be seduced by any delusive gratification! Such ὧδε and ἐκεῖ is not the right,[1] therefore let it not interrupt or divert you in the slightest degree from your way of patient faith (μὴ ἀπέλθητε), nor let it hurry you with impetuous earnestness to follow after a great delusion (μηδὲ διώξητε). For My coming will, like the lightning, be sudden and indubitable. The expression ἐκ τῆς ὑπ' οὐρανὸν εἰς τὴν ὑπ' οὐρανὸν is to be understood by supplementing χώρα, of the opposite ends of the earth, as the parallel passage in St Matthew shows; ἡ ὑπ' οὐρανόν is neither the whole earth as Bengel supposes, nor is it a single land, as if the revelation of Christ extended from one land to another, as Grotius interprets, misunderstanding the lightning! The Lord speaks here of the day of His coming and manifestation in a prophetically indefinite manner; and in these preparatory words blends into one the distinctive epochs, the discrimination of which His subsequent prediction in some degree enters upon. But in ver. 25 He gives the great decisive explanation which would annihilate all false παρατήρησις, that the Messiah must *previously*, in His first manifestation,

[1] Alford finds here "a warning to all so-called expositors, and followers of expositors of prophecy, who cry ἰδοὺ ὧδε and ἰδοὺ ἐκεῖ, every time that war breaks out or revolutions occur." Well said, for English Christians especially!

suffer and be rejected; see already upon Matt. xvi. 21, xvii. 12. And inasmuch as He sets this over against His last parousia, this *παθεῖν* and *ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι* at the same time embraces the whole period of His Cross-*kingdom*, *τὰ εἰς* Χριστὸν *παθήματα*, 1 Pet. i. 11.

Vers. 26–30. There immediately follows a second great explanatory declaration, that His "days" in the second sense will only bring *judgment* to the unbelieving world instead of the rejected, and hitherto vainly expected, redemption. Once more we have, what in Matt. xxiv. and Lu. xxi. is more distinctively developed, the destruction of Jerusalem and the final judgment typically blended together in one. Only thus much does the once more repeated *ἡμέραι* of the plural intimate, that before the *ἡμέρα* of ver. 30, there will be interposed periods of preparatory warning, preludes, *times* of approaching and ever-increasing judgment and manifestation, which will, however, down to the last be slighted and misunderstood. As to the particular detail, see on Matt. xxiv. 37–39. Eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, first; for sensuality was the fundamental sin of the antediluvians, which will assuredly be reproduced in the last days. Only here are adjoined the days of *Lot* with their higher culture in buying and selling, planting and building, which again will be reproduced in the wide-extended institutions of universal industry filling the earth which is no longer to exist: thus together all sensuality and all worldly culture are included. *Κατὰ ταὐτά*, *τὰ αὐτά*, that is, after this model and type will be the last judgment: *generally* upon the secure world turned into a Sodom like the Flood, but with *fire* like that which consumed Sodom before established as a *ὑπόδειγμα* (2 Pet. ii. 6; Jude 7).

Vers. 31–33. Moreover that in this preliminary, indefinite view, there may not be altogether wanting a hint at the destruction of *Jerusalem* the holy city, the Lord here already utters what is more plainly stated *concerning that* in Matt. xxiv. 17, 18, —although even their first hearers might have connected this with the parallel of *Sodom* if they had thought of such threatenings against Jerusalem as Isa. i. 9, 10, iii. 9; Jer. xxiii. 14; Ezek. xvi. 48. For the rest, the utterance proceeds in three clauses: first, the typical warning—let not him who fleeth turn back! which looks forward to the typical coming of Christ in

judgment upon Jerusalem, but indeed does not mean that *alone;* then a *corroboration* of this by a plain typical backward glance at Lot's wife; and, finally, the undisguised expression of the fundamental principle—more than once repeated already, Lu. ix. 24; Matt. x. 39, etc. etc.—which will then hold good in its strongest sense.[1] There is, however, in this an advancement upon the former warning; the subject previously was the judgment upon an unbelieving world, but now the danger is alluded to which threatens the fleeing righteous, if they tarry; as afterwards vers. 34–36 a final and rigorous separation even between the closely linked labourers in the kingdom is threatened. As they were not to come down from the house-top to fetch their stuff from the house, so they were not in fear disobediently to *turn back* upon the judgment at their heels—as *Lot's wife* had done, whose history Wisd. x. 7 had early thus symbolically explained.

Vers. 34–36. As in Matt. xxiv. 40, 41, to which let the reader turn back. Here as there, we find a twofold reference: first, an assurance that the redeemed of the Lord will live and move down to the last *in the midst of* the world, will have the society of life ἐντὸς τοῦ κόσμου (but *as* the children of the kingdom, so that the inward separation already exists); then, parabolically, the intimation that even the labouring servants and handmaids of the Lord will not all be found prepared. The order of Matt. xxiv. is reversed, and there is a third member added here, and placed in its strength of meaning, first:—the bed indicates the *closest* fellowship of life (as in marriage), then the mill a fellowship of labour which is in some sense intimate; and finally the being together in the field (without any mention of labour) indicates any kind of fellowship generally.[2] Oh ye impatient questioners as to the when and the where, separate yourselves not externally before the time!—It is further observable, that the Lord once at the beginning speaks of a *night* instead of His "day," ver. 30. This is not casually introduced from the

[1] It would be instructive to collate (as Braune does in a tabular form) the *five*, properly *six*, *variations* of the expression, each one with a distinctive emphasis. Matt. x. 39; xvi. 25 (Lu. ix. 24); Mark viii. 35; Lu. xvii. 33; Jno. xii. 25.

[2] Ver. 36 must not thus be given up; it has not simply passed over from St Matthew, but has been omitted because of its similarity with the first.

allusion to the bed, but the *ταύτῃ τῇ νυκτί*, emphatically taking the lead, is descriptive of the *world's condition* when the lightening of the day of Christ shall burst upon it; thus it is not properly (as Grotius supposes) the nox atra calamitatum, for the judgments are rather already *ἡμέραι* of the Son of man, but the darkness of sin and unbelief, comp. presently ch. xviii. 8, and 1 Thess. v. 2–8.

Ver. 37. This *ποῦ* of the disciples, to which a *ὅπου* plainly replies, has been erroneously regarded as the undefined outcry of apprehension—How is this? when can this be? They *ask* strictly concerning the *where*, because their Master's words have been hitherto so *local*, and the undertone of their question is—Can it be that this shall happen in the holy land, in Jerusalem itself? In which appears a delusion in them similar to that which caused the Pharisees not to ask about the *where* of the kingdom, taking that for granted. The Lord here preliminarily answers by a concise, prophetical-typical, enigmatical word, the true meaning of which we have unfolded upon Matt. xxiv. 28; it remains only to remark how that meaning here applies in its simple ground-thought—everything in its time and order, everything as it is meet! Ask not curiously after the Where, the How, or the When, but *see*, where the corruption of death is, there will the eagles come![1] Where it is night, the lightning gives its frightful glare! Let it be your only care to be found as the living, and as the children of the light!

THE IMPORTUNATE WIDOW BEFORE THE UNJUST JUDGE.

(Lu. xviii. 2–8.)

Hear now, what the true and faithful Witness, the only begotten Son, saith to us concerning the Father! This goes far beyond the analogy between our paternal love and the Divine, between our friendship, loth to rise at midnight, yet overcome by supplication, and the Divine: we have now the boldest word used in this kind of analogical argument, which no man would

[1] "Now should the Apostles discern how the Jewish people appeared in the sight of God." Roos.

have dared to use concerning the holy God and righteous Father, had not the Son of God Himself given it to us! But with all its condescension, the highest majesty is yet vindicated, which can never deny itself or derogate from its own dignity. It is this which is gloriously illustrated in the inexpressible and adorable benignity with which the righteous Judge of all the earth appeals to us short-sighted mortals—If I were such an unjust judge as those which ye have upon earth! But am I such?

Vers. 2, 3. A history this, too common in the affairs of this evil world, and even in those of God's people Israel, as the prophetic denunciations against the corrupt judges, and promises to the oppressed widows, abundantly show;—two well-known personages, therefore, appear upon the scene, with a third—the enemy—in the background, as we may now observe preliminarily. *Judges* and officers were to be appointed in Israel in all the gates of all their cities, who should judge the people with just judgment (Deut. xvi. 18), and in the time of Jesus we find still existing the judicatures mentioned in Matt. v. 21, 22. But this κριτὴς τῆς ἀδικίας despises all those injunctions which were given to the judges in the law (Ex. xxiii. 6–9; Lev. xix. 15, Deut. i. 16, 17; comp. 2 Chron. xix. 6, 7); and that not from any forgetfulness of duty, but with a bold and proud confidence rebelliously spurns it all—I know it all, *but I* fear not! (The possible sometime punishment!) If there were only the fear of God, the beginning of wisdom and the foundation of the supplicating trust of faith, that of itself would teach him to have regard to the urgent supplications of a poor mortal, the cry for right and the complaint against injustice. But *this* is meant in the delineation of this bad character, in its wider sense, as it expresses the thoughts of *his own* heart in ver. 6; and not in the other sense which ἐντρέπεσθαι might bear as a stronger word for reverence or awe, see Matt. xxi. 37; Lu. xx. 13; Heb. xii. 9. The presumptuous man thus inverts the true relations of the two sentiments:—the higher *dignity*, which demands consideration and regard, he only thinks of in connection with man; and, as it regards *God*, thinks only of the *power* to be feared, which he first scorns as the less thing, and then afterwards declares to himself that *not even* has he respect for anything human—as more immediately concerning *him*. Ah, thou proud worm, who

settest thyself up for a god, because thou art a judge in a city! Hess is far from extracting the meaning when he superficially says:—"he had neither religion nor honourable feeling." For φοβεῖσθαι τὸν θεόν after all only suggests the slightest beginning of all religion; while ἀνθρώπους ἐντρέπεσθαι, on the other hand, expresses not merely the fear of people's judgment, the restraint of regard for others' estimate, but the respect for anything apart from self, and then the consideration to regard and alleviate the misery of others, the hearing of their supplication, and fear of their righteous complaint. What worse could be *recorded* of a man than this? And yet there follows the much worse thing, that *he himself* in the daring of his heart thus *speaks* of himself! Over against this man there is the *widow*, as such troubled and bowed down, and besides that, as is too commonly the case, oppressed by an enemy:—not a hard-hearted believer, or anything of that sort, which might allow it to be supposed that the right was not on her side, and that the judge could not be induced to bend to her request by sympathy; but he is a persecutor, against whom she has cause of just complaint—ἐκδίκησόν με. Schleiermacher would understand this—Give the verdict at any rate, be it for or against me, that I may know the end of this wearisome litigation; but he forgets in this unhappy violation of the spirit of the parable, that in the parallel ver. 7 ποιεῖν τὴν ἐκδίκησιν, both the certain right and the great distress of the petitioner are taken for granted. It is better to translate generally—Do me right! in which the consequence of the judgment, her being saved from oppression, is of course included. *Thus she came* to him, that is, repeatedly, for she is to be an example of the μὴ ἐγκακεῖν:[1] and that is here assumed as afterwards in vers. 4, 5. Consequently ἤρχετο is equivalent to *ventitabat* (by which she complied with her own obligation in the city where a judge dwelt); and the οὐκ ἠθέλησεν is a continual refusal of her request and repulsion of the applicant. The enemy was not necessarily mighty or influential (considerations which the proud judge did not take into account, and which would rather have

[1] On this word, which occurs also as ἐγκακεῖν, from the uncertain and various derivation, see my exposition of the Epistle to Ephesians, ch. iii. 13. It signifies—*to desist*, *give up*, especially through lack of strength, to yield in fight; also, to be overcome of evil, to *succumb*.

moved him to maintain *his* official authority by a rigorous sentence), but might have been the judge's friend or favourite; or the poor widow had no largess to bring, without which it was not his fashion to undertake a cause, or she could not pay the costs; or it may be that when she came first he had no inclination to pursue his function, and afterwards persisted in refusing for the sake of proud consistency. What else could a poor widow expect from an *unjust* judge? Nevertheless she does not desist from urging the *judge* even as the enemy did not desist from urging her; she does not abandon the hope of pressing through every obstacle by the tenacity of her *cry;* she adheres simply (possibly with something of hope in God at the bottom, or if the parable must abide in the mere human domain, with eager expectation of man's help in her need) to this one note—Art thou not placed here as a *judge* to do right and execute justice, especially to the oppressed widow (as many times in Moses, from Ex. xxii. 22 to Deut. xxvii. 19; then also inculcated often in the prophets), and therefore to me! just as in chap. xi., the one makes his appeal to the other—Art thou not my *friend!*

For the rest, it must be observed in reference to the interpretation which follows, that the *widow* represents, not so much an individual soul oppressed and bereft of help, as the people, the congregation of the elect, the church apparently forsaken of God, especially in the *last time*, as predicted in ch. xvii.; so that in this point we see the *connection* of the discourse which is either continued in itself, or attached designedly by St Luke. Although the church is ever the *bride* waiting for the marriage and entrance into her home, yet is she, as otherwise described in Scripture, the widow, forsaken and solitary (שׁוֹמֵמָה, Isa. liv. 1), a prey to her persecuting *enemy*. We note well, too, who he is:—the same, of whom Richter's Hausbibel says that he is a yet greater jurist than all the Popes and all the Napoleons—the antichrist with Satan behind him.

Vers. 4, 5. Ἐπὶ χρόνον, though elsewhere χρόνος signifies a long time, does not mean in St Luke's phraseology the per multum tempus of the Vulg., but rather the aliquamdiu of Erasmus, or what the English Bible translates "for a while." Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα only indicates generally a certain space; but this formula, as well as the sense of the whole parable, rather requires us to

suppose a proportionably hasty overcoming of his inflexibility through her incessant coming, and ever-urgent supplication—for the shameless man could not long endure this, as the words spoken in his heart betray. These words, however, must be carefully observed, and an undertone will be perceived in them which most expositors overlook. *First of all*, assuredly, the Cyclopæan arrogance[1] of this language spoken ἐν ἑαυτῷ exhibits his shamelessness in full perfection; for he is thinking of God's undenied existence and presence even while he contemns Him, and puffs from him all mankind (יָפִיחַ בָּהֶם, Ps. x. 5, xii. 5) when an unfortunate child of man thwarts his purpose. And thus he will as godless and as shameless *apologise* to himself, as it were, for acting inconsistently in once doing right, overcoming the εἰ by a διάγε. Did he *refuse* before, and that absolutely—wherefore will he now do the right? Because this widow troubleth *me* (this exacting I is more than God or man!);—compare ch. xi. 7, 8, and note the slight oblique reproof which these words might suggest to the Apostles, who once, Matt. xv. 23, presumed to impute to Jesus the being accessible to such a motive for helping a poor woman! This becomes intolerable to him, he must make an end of it, that she may not by incessantly coming with ever-waxing boldness utterly destroy his peace. We understand ὑπωπιάζειν (literally to smite so as to discolour, and especially the face, then used proverbially as in 1 Cor. ix. 27) as a strong expression of vexatious harassing; as we should now say—"the woman torments me to death!" Not that he actually feared violence; εἰς τέλος does not mean that *in the end* she might *even* proceed to blows, but as belonging to ἐρχομένη it implies *ceaselessly* coming, in which sense it is a translation of לָנֶצַח. (Syr. is here quite correct—בכל עדן). It is this incessant coming which he terms ὑπωπιάζειν or *obtundere*, and he will endure it no longer. Quite correctly has Luther for ἐκδικήσω —Ich *will* sie retten, it is my will to right her, I will μετὰ

[1] Οὐ γὰρ Κύκλωπες Διὸς αἰγιόχου ἀλέγουσιν, οὐδὲ θεῶν μακάρων, ἐπεὶ πολὺ φέρτεροί εἰμεν· Οὐδ' ἂν ἐγὼ Διὸς ἔχθος ἀλευάμενος πεφιδοίμην οὔτε σοῦ, ὀυθ' ἑτάρων, εἰ μὴ θυμός με κελεύει. Odyss. ix. 275–278. Now latterly our *philosophers* and *critics* have become such Cyclopes with the *one* eye of their θυμός, just as according to Seneca Epist. 29 (cited by Eyth) philosophy influenced one—ut *sine metu deorum hominumque* vivas!

ταῦτα do what ἐπὶ χρόνον I would not—tel est mon plaisir, or with the Cyclops—θυμός με κελεύει. That is, so thinks the daring man that he means, *but* it is nevertheless not so; rather is his θυμός overcome as himself confesses, he can endure it no longer and *must* make an end of it. And why is that? Might he not have thrown off the burden by preventing her coming at all, inflicting upon *herself* the blows:—Wherefore then did he continue so long to hold on to the mere "I will not!"? What makes him feel her coming and beseeching to be as blows in his face? We see, in short, that the man is not so utterly without feeling, not so hopelessly wicked as he had predicated of himself, and as the Lord on that account had spoken of him as being; it is *not* quite true that he feared not God nor regarded man. For he actually *regards* τὴν χήραν ταύτην, a poor, helpless woman, who besides that ran to him with her trouble; he has within him a respect, not confessed to himself, for the *supplication* of a wretched woman for her *rights*—for he is a *judge*, and it cannot but remind him of *God*, whose prerogative it is to hear the cry of the afflicted widow and the fatherless child. (Ex. xxii. 22, 23.) Here we find, then, in the midst of the apparently awful contrast, a secret transition to the application, and a ground whereon to rest it:—And shall not God who has placed this almost inextinguishable feeling in the heart of man, which prevents him from finally rejecting persistent supplication, not *Himself hear our prayer?* He who planted such an ear, shall He not hear? (Ps. xciv. 9.)[1]

Vers. 6–8. It might seem that the application should obviously be—Behold here what the poor widow did! But more to the point, more striking, more convincing, and more in harmony with the distinctive tendency of the parable, is the impressive inference from the ἐκδικήσω of the judge, whose ἀδικία even in spite of himself is obliged to give way, to the willingness of God to rescue man, and especially to help His crying elect. *Shall He not avenge?*[2] and, moreover, whom? Even the poor woman goes to

[1] This, at least, corresponds better to our feeling of the subject than to regard the judge as κριτὴς τῆς ἀδικίας absolutely, and to the end *utterly without feeling;* or, as Alford says—his very ἐκδίκησις was ἀδικία, because he did it from *self-regard* and not from a *sense of duty.*

[2] This is of itself much stronger than the German—Sollte Gott nicht auch?—Should not God? The reading ποιήσει is acknowledged by Winer,

Him also as a *Judge;* but He is much more than that upon the throne of His kingdom: for here are *His own elect*, loved from eternity and called according to the purpose of His grace, to whose good all things must minister, and for whose salvation's sake the times of judgment and calamity are to be shortened! (Matt. xxiv. 22.) They must indeed for a while suffer from the Enemy, but they cease not to cry for help before the throne of the Highest—*Day and night* being a proverbial expression most significantly used for the πάντοτε of ver. 1. (Lu. ii. 37.) He who prayeth *by night* can be no hypocrite before man in his prayer; his soul is possessed by such fervour towards God as permits him not to rest. Further, the μὴ ἐκκακεῖν[1] which was not tautological at the commencement, appears now, in the light of the parable, to denote the ever-increasing vehemence and zeal of a fervent and impetuous βοᾷν. Let there be no darkening question here interposed—Art thou who criest certainly one of the elect? It is enough just to convert the proposition—Those who cry day and night unto God *are* by that token the elect! They implore not the ἐκδίκησις of God simply, inasmuch as they suffer oppression and wrong from the evil world and its prince (Ps. ciii. 6, cxlvi. 7); for they know well that this injustice is, on account of their sins, no injustice as before the highest tribunal of God. But their *faith* in the promise, through which they have received the election of grace (see presently ver. 8), pleads with a sacred importunity, such as the Lord in ver. 1 impresses with intensity in the expression δεῖν, for the *merciful* deliverance which is their appropriate *right* now as being the elect, as much as the ἐκδίκησις was the due of the poor and oppressed widow. That ἐκδικησόν με corresponds with the prayer in the Psalms: κρῖνόν με κύριε, Ps. xxvi. 1, liv. 3, εἰς τὴν δίκην μου, Ps. xxxv. 23 (ὅτι ἐποίησας τὴν κρίσιν μου καὶ τὴν δίκην μου, Ps. ix. 5), comp. furthermore 1 Macc. ii. 67.

How does the Lord then point the application? Assuredly what is involved here is the crying day and night, the waiting

among others, to be the rather admissible, though Lachmann prefers ποιήσῃ: but both readings would in truth concur in the same sense.

[1] Strangely by Schleiermacher made to refer, in spite of the aim of the whole parable, to the blending of *working* with prayer'

in faith for the certain answer to the question—*Will* He not grant the request, and avenge? For there is in the ἐπὶ χρόνον the *appearance* as if He would not! But now when the Lord indicates *this* point of incidence between the parable and its interpretation, He designs to make prominent in it the *contrast* for stronger assurance, and as preparing the way for His own λέγω ὑμῖν. Luther's translation of that most important, and most profound additional clause:—"und sollte (er nicht) Geduld darüber haben?"—"and have patience with them?" is most assuredly incorrect, and contains no clear sense at all; apart from the fact that μακροθυμεῖν does not signify the merciful hearing of the request, but obviously a *tarrying* and putting off to grant it. Others read it as a question—"And doth He linger or hesitate about it? No, He certainly doth not, but is willing at once!"—But this would be contrary to that doctrine of the Divine delay and lingering which we find recognised in other parts of Scripture, and even in some of our Lord's other parables: the appearance, yea, the reality, of such delay is essential here to the entire matter in hand. To change the reading μακροθυμῶν for μακροθυμεῖ,[1] would not essentially affect the sense; and we cannot but think that it corresponds with the fundamental idea of the parable, which is concentrated upon this point, to regard the καὶ as here standing for καίπερ; and hence Meyer corrects it—Although He forbears towards them; and the Engl. transl. has very properly—Though He bear long. But it is not just as Hassler seizes it—For He is forbearing towards them, not troubled and harassed by their unjust importunity. The most obvious and plain sense of this well-known μακροθυμεῖν[2] must ever be the letting them pray on without granting their prayer, the lingering with the help, the keeping silence (Ps. lxxxiii. 2), which causes the impatient petitioners to cry out—Alas, O Lord, how long? How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood? (Rev. vi. 10.) Why withdrawest Thou Thy hand, even Thy right hand? pluck it out of Thy bosom

[1] Which Bengel prefers as insignis lectio, and says: Prioris membri verbum in textu transit in participium βοώντων, alterius membri verbum stat immotum, μακροθυμεῖ, longanimis est?

[2] Lange says—*hochherzig*, large-minded, with a heavenly greatness of mind and requirement—but this is ungrounded.

—and make *an end!* (Ps. lxxiv. 11.) But we see (as Roos hits the point most pertinently) that "what in the unjust judge is *hardness of heart* is in God *forbearance*"—since wisdom and love move *Him* for good reasons to delay His relief, and protract their prayers. This *forbearance* is not to be regarded here, first of all, as forbearance towards a wicked world, lengthening the limits of probation (2 Pet. iii. 9), though that also is combined with it; for the ἐπ' αὐτοῖς shows the elect to be its object. There is a mystery here, the solution of which is left to the enforcement of a faith which will not be baffled by it; an indication of *important reasons*, which God must have for such delay in the case of His own elect. If we seize this aright, then may we go on to observe, penetrating still deeper, that there is now a collateral idea which was urged prematurely before:—"*Although* He indeed does not help, on acconnt of *His being fatigued* with their prayer"—for He significantly abides the crying much longer than the unjust judge; it is to Him the pleasure of His love to be urgently and fervently, and perseveringly prayed unto; He would be overcome by the true Israelites as He was by their forefather Israel![1] Thus we see that He does not once drive away His petitioners as the judge had done many times; He merely keeps silence, and does not *grant the request*, though He patiently listens to the *pleading* continually. Here find we the "exceedingly refined meaning of μακροθυμεῖν" which Olshausen refers to, which, though as a fact seemingly discouraging, itself becomes an argument of confidence—"Thou *hearest* my request, however, therefore Thou wilt assuredly *grant* it!" For faith thus tested and disciplined can cry, "It was only to purify me wholly, that thou couldst delay so long!" The patience of the Lord towards the world is at the same time a patience with *us* in order to our salvation: see 2 Pet. iii. 15 as following ver. 9.

Oh how will He *then* avenge and vindicate His own elect, and how speedily! Oh how will He reveal Himself in superabundant kindness to the desolate one, when the reproach of her widowhood is remembered no more, declaring Himself to be her Bridegroom and Husband! (Isa. liv. 1–5.) Every act of sal-

[1] Lange, according to his view above—"though He deals with them in His great and incomprehensible way."

vation, and every urgent request granted, is indeed in a certain sense a *coming* of the Lord, oftentimes taking place when "least hoped for, and when the energy of faith and prayer was almost extinguished"—and this preliminary *application* may be therefore justified![1] But the ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς is not only a coming from heaven, a descending with His saving power generally; but it signifies the coming of the *Son of man*, that is, in His personal, visible presence (chap. xvii. 22)—as everywhere so here it is to be eschatologically understood. We have already referred to the question whether a connection with chap. xvii. may be here established; the αὐτοῖς, chap. xviii. 1, cannot be said, "without doubt," to continue the former discourse, still less must the καί be pressed to mean item de præparatione ad futura illa. It may be so, it may not: for ἔλεγε δὲ καί is after all the general formula for something new, as αὐτοῖς is a general definition of the disciples. We can very well understand, without any other aid, why in this last period of His teaching (since Luke ix. 51) the Lord often came back to His Parousia.

The ἐν τάχει may be regarded as the Divine measurement for the whole period of forbearing delay. He cannot hasten to deliver His people, and reveal Himself sooner than this wise μακροθυμεῖν prescribes (hence, *e g.*, Rom. xvi. 20). His operations are ruled by His prudence, one thing after the other, everything must be done that is preparatorily required; and in the end this ἐν τάχει will have its proper and essential truth, in the sudden conclusion of all:—this fulness of meaning the same expression is found to bear in all its comprehensiveness in Rev. i. 1. "*But* will the Son of man, when He cometh, find faith?" Thus generally taken the word would be too rigorous, especially after the crying saints have been referred to; and it seems to verge upon an entire failure in the work of redemption. This is not, however, the language here used; the article in τὴν πίστιν points especially to *that* faith of unwearied and unweariable prayer, as it were, that *absolute*, *perfected*, *consummate*, faith which the parable has set before us. It is true, viewed under two

[1] As Baxter (Saints' Rest) begins his book: When the Son of God come with recovering grace, and discoveries of a spiritual and eternal happiness and glory, *He finds not faith* in man to believe it—with a spiritual application to the Lord's coming into the heart.

aspects, first, that the slightest, weakest faith (often being encouraged as such) has, as being faith, much power; and then, on the other hand, that "a slender, tottering faith is something infinitely little, *yea as nothing*, when we compare it with the great substance of the Gospel, with the immeasurable love of God: —the father tells his child that he has learned nothing when he has only learned a little, and that he shows no obedience, when his obedience is but slight" (Roos). We think, moreover, that the Lord in His gracious strictness thus puts the faith of His elect in question, only that He may found upon it a great assurance, and say:—The Son of man, on that account, will not push His delay to the uttermost, for then even His elect might not be saved, they themselves might fall altogether into the ἐκκακεῖν of despair, as if there were no Judge in heaven, and as if there did not sit upon the throne of grace a Redeemer who long ago judged and triumphed over the enemy! Let us ever humbly mourn over our want of faith, and acknowledge that the ἐκδίκησις τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν will finally spring from that unmerited grace which will put an end to their trials, and that it will not be the result of the efforts of our wrestling *prayer* alone.[1] For the ἀντίδικος, as he has the power upon earth, so has he to the last a minimum of *right* against the elect, which, however, the consummating *mercy*, which always and conclusively perfects our faith in answering it, will utterly annihilate and extinguish; so that we shall obtain justice against Satan, and rejoice in it for ever. Thus will the Lord judge the cause of His people, and make them to rejoice in His mercy. (Ecclus. xxxv. 21.)

THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN.

(Luke xviii. 10–14.)

The πεπεισθότες ἐφ' ἑαυτοῖς, who trust *in themselves*, in the fixed and presumptuous imagination that they are *righteous*, have not *the* πίστις which the Son of man seeketh upon earth; their unqualified assumption ὅτι ἐσμὲν δίκαιοι is contradicted by the

[1] For it would be blasphemous to say "*Faith* doeth it all!" If Jehovah had not mercifully said "It is enough," Israel would never have *overcome*.

counter-testimony of their undeniable ἐξουθενεῖν τοὺς λοιποὺς—words which, in this superscription of the parable, sound almost like that previous haughty ἄνθρωπον οὐκ ἐντρέπομαι. These self-righteous ones to whom the Lord spoke were not *Pharisees;* for in that case (as Schleiermacher scarcely needed to insist) the figure of a Pharisee would not have been held up to them as a *similitude*.[1] The πρός τινας indeed continues within the circle of the αὐτοῖς ver. 1, and refers to certain *disciples*, whose spirit is thus indicated as being peculiar, improper, and perverted. We can scarcely assume that these τινές had given occasion for our Lord's words by any outward expression whether of trust in their own righteousness or of contempt toward others. The πρός is, as in ver. 1, the Evangelist's intimation of the tendency and *aim* of the parable, the superscription of which is thus given; and he bids us understand that it was not intended merely for those who were then *addressed*, but that we must find the τινές of the Lord's application among His disciples of all time, and possibly in ourselves:—and it is *to this* that the significant article in τοὺς πεποιθότας, and the present εἰσί belonging to it, seem to point. It is often said, one expositor echoing another, that these proud μαθηταί might, after hearing the preceding parables, have declared their spirit in some such way as this—"If prayer be the question, we can pray well enough, better than others; and as to faith, that is not lacking in *us*," and so forth; but we regard such a connection with what precedes as neither indicated in St Luke's words, nor probable or indeed conceivable in itself. Assuredly the brief, condensed, and diffident *prayer* of this first publican-repentance, does form an excellent pendant to the persistent crying of God's elect; and, taking the two parables together, we have in conjunction the boldness of faith and the

[1] Lange, indeed, opposes this obvious and often-repeated remark, by putting the converse;—in that case, he says, no Publican can be supposed to be present, and no Priest or Levite when the parable of the good Samaritan was delivered! But, apart from the incongruence of the last example (for the Priest and Levite there are not the central figures), this argument overlooks the distinction between the mere listening of the Pharisees and Publicans, and their being expressly the persons addressed in the parable. Assuredly we think that the Lord would not have addressed to Publicans, *as* Publicans, a parable concerning a justified Publican.

depth of humility which co-exist in all true prayer; but all these allusions and coincidences, like those before mentioned, must be referred to the tenor of St Luke's purpose, according to which he, from ch. xvii. 1 onwards, binds together, in a profoundly pregnant design, individual subjects of various kinds, and not in immediate historical sequence. (See further ch. xvii. 11, 20, xviii. 1, 10, 15, 18, 31, 35, where are merely parallel formulæ, quite distinct from those which we find in ch. xix. 1, 11, 28.) If, on the assumption of a historical connection after ch. xvii., the Pharisees would have to be regarded as among His hearers, *this* of itself would not, as we have already said, prove anything to the contrary; for Olshausen's assertion goes too far when it declares the exhibition of a Pharisee in a παραβολή before Pharisees themselves to be an altogether inadmissible theory.

Our Lord, moreover, persisted in His unvaried, unbroken, uniform controversy with the Pharisees, from the Sermon on the Mount down to the final Woes. But *this* parable has too often lost to our ears its simple power and grandeur, in consequence of our neglecting, through our very familiarity with it, to transpose ourselves into its scene and realise its living impression upon those who heard it first. The simple narrative begins with the every day occurrence of two men going up to the temple; though the sharp contrast which is suddenly called up to the mind (a Pharisee and a Publican, sounding very much like in India—a Brahmin and a Pariah!) would excite the attention to a high pitch, and lead the people to expect something anti-pharisaical in what was to follow:—though the righteous man comes off very well at first, his thankfulness before God seems well-grounded, and all that he says in his prayer is literally true. The hearers around must have said—"Verily they are just such, these holy men, even so do they in their very hearts regard their righteousness! And does not all this avail before God?" Then comes forward in contrast with him the penitent, broken-spirited Publican, and so graphically drawn in his reality, that one cannot but say—Such a Publican must often have exhibited just that same penitence, since the kingdom of heaven commenced among men. Many among the listening *people* (for this parable we feel was spoken openly before all)

might say, yielding to their first impulse—"Now *this* poor sinner will be *also* justified and accepted with the other;" and with what a flash of sudden amazement would they hear the supreme utterance of God's own decision on the prayers—*This* man justified and *not* that! This unveiling of their hearts before God is almost like the sudden withdrawal of the veil of Hades in ch. xvi.; only that the prayers themselves, the contrast of which must have seized all consciences, had prepared the way for it.

Ver. 10. Two *men* go up to *pray*:—in this simple introduction the right hearer will discern the aim and spirit of the whole; for whatever one man may be in the estimation of others, "his name hath been named already, and it is known that it is *man*," that is, a sinner before *God*, who "cannot contend with Him," but must sue for mercy (Eccles. vi. 10). The Publican's prayer is the only true prayer, not simply as the genuine expression of a first repentance, but also as the continuous ground of all prayer. But the name of God is not at once uttered, it is left to the petitioners themselves: they *go into the temple*, that is, their contemplated "praying" *appears* at first as a similar external work in both cases; the process of the parable will show, whether they both did actually go to *God* and truly *pray* to Him. And it was altogether right in both cases, for the house of God is especially a *house of prayer*, and remains so even in the New Testament, where, however, Solomon's word concerning coming to *hear* (Eccles. iv. 17) has much more weight than in God's ancient typical service it could have, before the *Word* of reconciliation was set up. A *Pharisee* and a Publican—this sounded, to the people long bound and habituated to the teaching of their judges (their Gooroos, to refer once more to India), very much like—A *pious man*, a *saint;* and a right proper *sinner!* We can scarcely realize vividly enough how astounding was our Saviour's declaration of war against the Pharisees; not less directly in the teeth of all prejudice and habitual custom than when afterwards His servants went forth announcing among the heathen,—that their gods were no gods! For the specious sanctity of such devotees is more dazzling, and less revolted against by the instinct of the conscience, than all the names and glories of false gods.—These two men presenting their prayers will probably suggest Cain and Abel (just as at Matt. v. 23)—

but which is in that case Cain? The Publican, who yet strangely dares to tread the sanctuary? Let us hear what and how they pray, and mark how great a difference there may be in the praying of two different men.

Vers. 11, 12. The great man has appropriately the precedence, and he was first named. But before we hear him, we must *look at him*, and so livingly reproduce the scene before our eyes. Then follows immediately, and very significantly for the ears of those who hear aright, *πρὸς ἑαυτόν*, whereas we should have expected *προσεύχεσθαι πρὸς τὸν θεόν*! The prodigal son came *εἰς ἑαυτόν*, the unjust steward pondered prudently *ἐν ἑαυτῷ*, this man turns back again still, even when designing to pray to God only, *πρὸς ἑαυτόν*—these are three not capricious gradations of the expression. But we must not, if we rightly understand this, construe the *πρὸς ἑαυτόν* with *προσηύχετο*, for that would not harmonize with the *ταῦτα* additionally following:[1] but it belongs to the *σταθείς*, as the *corresponding μακρόθεν ἑστώς* shows; and both design to set before us the two men in the most expressive manner, as the Lord proceeds to set forth their several prayers as heard by God. What then may be the precise meaning of *σταθείς*, standing alone, in regard to the former? Alford thinks that, as contrasted with the *ἑστώς* afterwards of the Publican (who stood merely, and remained as he came in), it is equivalent to placing himself *in position* (answering to being seated of the other usual posture)—in a studied place or attitude. This is involved in the expression, as we shall presently admit, but scarcely in the expression as it stands alone and without the additional clause, which, apart from that, will not harmonize with *προσηύχετο*. Externally the position of both seems just similar, for each stands apart by himself—but what a difference under this seeming similarity! We must

[1] Thus neither with Bengel—penes se ipsum orans, *sibi auscultans*, quasi *neminem* ferens sibi proximum (he supposes—ne Deum quidem in orando!)—nor invalidating the real emphasis which is in the expression, as Olshausen does: *προσηύχετο πρὸς ἑαυτόν* simply as equivalent to אֶל־בְּלִבּוֹ. Alford leans this way, giving *ἀγανακτοῦντες πρὸς ἑαυτούς*, Mark. xiv. 4, as a parallel: but the plural there makes the case very different—*among* themselves. We may obviously suppose that he did not utter his prayer *aloud* in the temple, without resorting to this; and it is very wide of the truth to interpret it, that he did not dare to let such a proud prayer be heard!

somewhat anticipate in order to catch this striking trait in the delineation of their character. Ἑστώς in itself indicates the prodigal's unstudied *standing* immediately after his entrance into the sanctuary; indeed it is almost left uncertain whether the fear-stricken man entered at all εἰς τὸ ἱερόν; the μακρόθεν *might* be taken in a more emphatic sense—He dared not enter in, deeming himself unworthy; for his *earnestness* in prayer looked towards the sanctuary of *God*, from which his *humility* felt itself justly excluded. On the other hand, the σταθείς signifies something intentional, *He placed himself* (chap. xix. 8)—and we naturally ask, where and for what purpose? The answer is—in a separate place, *alone by himself*, which πρὸς ἑαυτόν, as the external expression of an internal involution in self, must imply; even if, as Rosenmüller observes, πρὸς ἑαυτόν should never mean *solus* or *seorsim*, like καθ' ἑαυτόν, this lies in the symbolical significance of the word. Thus it is not as von Gerlach says (though otherwise rightly interpreting)—"he placed himself apart *boldly*, in his *usual* place;" but he turned only to *himself* (not to God), withdrawing himself into *himself* (from others), consequently carefully retreating from the impure neighbourhood of the other despised offerer of prayer whom he met there, exhibiting himself apart, as much as possible, from all others as *the* worshipper, *the* righteous man (as the Publican terms himself *the* sinner);—thus he stands not, properly speaking, before God at all, but only before *men*,[1] and does not even confound himself with other *Pharisees*, who are included among the "other men" of his prayer. It was an offence to him, at first, that he was obliged to go up with the Publican at all, and with all the more solicitude, on that account, he takes his own proper place.[2] Thus both stand apart, each for himself; but the one is designedly in the spirit of *pride* turned to the contempla-

[1] So that the same sense comes out which has been sought in προσευχεσθαι πρὸς ἑαυτόν, only more conformably with the occasion and the phraseology.

[2] Does the Lord mean to say—separated from the unclean Publican according to the usual custom? Grotius denies this, and says—nam *mos id ferebat*, ut publicani in atrio Gentilium, Pharisæi in atrio Israelitarum starent. But it is this very *custom* which our Lord paints, only that He exhibits this Pharisee, who would have a distinct atrium justorum for himself apart from other people, as carrying the matter beyond mere custom.

tion of *himself*, the other involuntarily in the spirit of *humility* remains *far off* from that God in heaven whom he truly supplicates.

And now for the so-called *prayer* of that one. Ταῦτα προσηύχετο—profuse and stately enough, at least in comparison with the Publican's λέγειν bursting from the depths of his heart in one deep sigh, concerning which we might suppose the Publican himself saying—"Alas, I a sinner *also* went up (but once, or this time in full earnest) to pray; but as I stood there, I could not *pray*, I could *only* utter one word—God be merciful to me a sinner!" The Pharisee is not thus embarrassed:—let us hear him! First comes the unrestrained and bold invocation of the name *of God*—so far well, happy they who lay hold of their privilege of entrance into His presence! "*I thank thee*"—that comes next, and, as it might seem, still better; for is not thankfulness to God proper, and seasonable, and blessed in all places and at all times? The angels only praise God, they have at least in their happy sufficiency nothing to pray for; we men have to thank God for the double benefit of creation and redemption; and that may be a high and heavenly prayer which, forgetting petition, lifts up before the presence of God thanksgiving alone. Still more: this holy man praises not God for any earthly blessing which might have been vouchsafed, nor for any common benefit or aid such as less pious men than he might be ready enough to acknowledge to God's glory; but he *thanks* God for this, that he commits not sin, that he is not a sinner like other men. And is it for God's *grace* that he is thankful, that grace which had brought him to this, which had saved, and purified, and preserved his soul from sin? Ah no, far enough is he *from that;* for what read we next? That I *am* not as other men are—in this treacherous, this presumptuous *am*, the wretch within suddenly shows himself as he is; and all that good beginning is resolved into mere hypocrisy and factitious conventionality of words! Only a deceitful compliment to God, assumed to give his words the form of *prayer.* We mark at once, as the degenerate prayer goes on from worse to worse, why he has not anything to *supplicate* like other men have, and why *his "I thank thee!"* is a mere empty form of words, in which God only is the receiving party. Genuine *thanksgiving*, even if it begins, must proceed onward to *confession*

—for I am worthy of nothing, less than the least of Thy mercies. Turn to 1 Cor. xv. 9, 10, and see how another, once likewise a Pharisee, thanks in genuine gratitude the *grace* of God that he is what he is, a labourer above all the rest of the Apostles. But our Pharisee knows nothing whatever of sin or of grace in relation to himself. "I am a righteous man fundamentally, and since I am such, I was never anything else." The wretched man intends to pray, and has made his beginning with "O God;" but since he finds himself wanting in nothing (nay, out of his external *πάντα ὅσα κτῶμαι* he can give his tribute), he passes by praying altogether, and proceeds forthwith to *thanksgiving*. But even in this there is nothing but himself for him to think of, himself, the complete and consummate Pharisee is all:—that he is not like other men! Yes, it is even literally—not *ὥσπερ οἱ λοιποὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων*; for he despises *τοὺς λοιποὺς* totally and in mass. There are only two classes of mankind in the presence of God, and himself alone constitutes one! If we do him injustice, his own foolish lips are to blame:—indeed he seems to have lost all propriety and rational understanding in what he tells his God. Alas, thou prodigy of mankind, thou single and preeminent *man!* didst thou not go up as man to the temple to pray, and art thou no longer a man like other men?

Let us hear further:—who are then the other men, like whom he is not? Nought but sinners; and he can most magisterially describe and condemn them in all their forms. And does he then so accurately know all other men, far and wide, their life and their hearts? As to their hearts, he thinks as little as he does of his own; but he has *seen* sins enough externally committed among them (that is assuredly true!); in himself, however, he has seen none (and that, alas, God pity him! is true also). *Extortioners* they are—selfishness places that *first*, mammon being its supreme good, and the aggression of others upon that being the most grievous offence; we will leave it undetermined whether there is here a secret sideglance at *this Publican*, whom as his abhorred fellow-worshipper he has in view from the beginning. Then come the *unjust* of manifold sorts in common; and then again immediately (for he must sum up hastily in order to arrive at *himself*), that one more great scandalous sin may be named—very familiar to his thoughts,

though he repels it from his own soul,—the *adulterers*. But the enumeration is very far from running through all the commandments and prohibitions:—idolatry at the beginning, and evil desire in the heart at the close of the decalogue, never occur to his thoughts. If we could suppose God to answer him by setting before him the *true* catalogue, with the question appended in each case—*Art* thou not such thyself? at least in My sight? then might a revealing light have penetrated to his soul, and he might have recognised in himself the extortioner, and even the adulterer (according to Jno. viii. 9, and especially in the spiritual meaning). But he has never allowed the word or prohibition of God to speak to his conscience, and therefore he can speak to God with yet greater confidence; reaching the climax of his presumption when he scornfully points with his finger, and utters those fearful words of vanity (Is. lviii. 9; Prov. vi. 13)—Or even *as this Publican!* In all this he condemns himself; for it is his misery, not to be like other men who are conscious of their sin, and that he does not pray like this petitioner standing before him. Invading God's prerogative, he gives judgment before either he or the other had been answered; he has no eyes and no feeling for the humility which loudly speaks in the external appearance of him who was *truly praying;* for what is prayer *to him*, what can he know thereof even while he is appearing to pray? Thus his inmost thoughts come frankly and plainly out into expression in this first portion of his prayer,—*in that* he is no hypocrite, but "*sincerely* trusted in himself that he was righteous, and therefore he tells that to his God in the prayer which God alone heard." (Wesley.) The Saviour shows in this parable, how "the internal character of the soul reveals itself in *prayer*, that is, when it is uttered not according to prescribed forms, but in its own words and *without dissimulation*." (Roos.) There is a profound gentleness in the circumstance that this parable, which graciously would create shame in the sinner by the promise of mercy, does not exhibit one of those hypocrites who could never have undertaken to say before God that they were not as other men, but one of the better sort, *one who in his profound self-deception may be regarded as sincere.*[1]

[1] "And in that fashion there are sufficient found to imitate this Publican, as they pray their Our Father; they have heard the word that God

The Lord makes the experiment with such an one, whether he would learn wisdom by seeing himself thus exhibited in a glass (for the parable is doubtless intended for Pharisees generally); and to His disciples He exhibits such a character in parable, confronted with which the sincere "God be merciful to me a sinner!" might lead some of them to smite upon their breasts, and be a *deductio ad absurdum*. In the hearing of men, many Pharisees among His own disciples might be very ready with their "merciful to me a sinner!" at the same time that they think in their hearts, "I thank thee that I am not like the children of the world and other natural men:"—*both* a mere form of speech, the first in that case the worst of all.[1] This man here under the law has not gone so far; He *would*, indeed, justify himself *before God* (ch. xvi. 15), since he altogether forgets that God knoweth his heart—and how ill he succeeded in that! He places the abused name of God first, which *taken in vain* at once condemns him; the lying thanksgiving follows; and, finally, his *contempt of others*, and uncharitable condemnation of his neighbour whom he sees before him in God's presence, makes evident the groundlessness of his πεποίθησις; as the violation of the second table ever presupposes a trespass against the first.

But the Pharisee-prayer has also a second part, a second table, in which the beloved I, not like unto other men, must come forward with its evidence, and impute to self all its authentic righteousness; so that instead of receiving his thanks God Himself must conversely be made its debtor. (Isa. lviii. 2.) After he has repelled every imputation of violating the *prohibitions*, he does not pass to the positive ordinances of rectitude and mercy (not knowing anything of these, as it seems); but,

is ready always to forgive poor sinners, and they have learned to smite upon their breasts, and in word and gesture closely to copy the Publican, so that one might swear, even they themselves might almost swear, that they are precisely in the state of this poor penitent. But all, meanwhile, is mere deception; they are Pharisees like the other, no better." So Luther in his sermon, fundamentally expounding the narrative as a *parable*.

[1] For "this self-deception, such a self-justifying estimate of self is possible, without any rank hypocrisy: it is to be found, alas, only too often among so-called excellent and *sincere* men." (Zeller, Monatsbl. 1844. Nr. 10.)

making a great leap over this chasm, mentions at once the *works of supererogation!* His prayer, as a whole, may be variously arranged. First of all, he shows what he *is*, then what he *does*, and yet again what he *gives*. Or it may run thus: My conduct to my neighbour—all this I am *not!* My service to God—I diligently fast, and beyond the commandment! My fulfilment of the law—I go beyond its requirements, tithing even in things doubtful! (ch. xi. 42). He now reaches the end, and knows no more; even the *alms* (which, indeed, might be part of the fasting) are remarkably enough pretermitted while he thinks of his mint and cummin; as to his official duty to help *other people*, so that they may become *such as he is* (Acts xxvi. 29), of that he has not the most distant thought. Even the *fasting*, which should have led to his internal mortification in order to true prayer, he despatches or achieves[1] twice in the week as a work of supererogation (Mondays and Thursdays beyond the commandment, according to the then custom). On the *Sabbath* itself he enjoys all the more complacently his meal; and the question may arise, whether or not with ἁρπαγὴ καὶ ἀκρασία, Matt. xxiii. 25. (Thou Sunday-Christian, dost thou *pray* only *once* in the week, when thou goest into the temple?) Finally, in his beautiful conclusion, πάντα ὅσα κτῶμαι, he reposes serenely, over against the God whom he invokes, on his mammon (*jactat possessiones*); as we popularly lay the emphasis upon the last word—of all that I *possess!* When we look narrowly it is not κέκτημαι, but κτῶμαι, that is, "of all which I *acquire*, obtain by my efforts, produce;" thus making the words still worse in their significance, for he procures for himself all that he possesses. Even this κτῶμαι, which might have at last driven him to a repetition of his thankfulness for what God had *given him*, stands in blunt contrast with his εὐχαριστῶ σοι:—"*Thank* thou *me* for what I give out of my acquired possessions!" He can connect *God* and his own poor, wealthy *I* with its appendage, much more comfortably to his own mind than can the Publican, whose own probably

[1] And, indeed, without much difficulty, like the Romanists now. "What was easier in the warm East, and where the day ended at six, than to fast a whole day? The great meal of the day would be in the evening." (Braune.)

not inconsiderable *πάντα ὅσα κτῶμαι* begins to weigh down his heart.

Ver. 13. That the proud worshipper had most formally and ceremonially prayed, with *uplifted* eyes and hands, we may gather from the contrast which is now given:—the humble man, remembering in the temple *God* and His throne in *heaven* (Matt. xxiii. 21, 22), and the invocation of that God being a great reality in *his* mouth, regards himself as unworthy even to lift up his eyes (Ezra ix. 6. Prayer of Manasses ver. 9, comp. with Prov. xxx. 12, 13)—*οὐδὲ τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς*, not even his eyes, not to say his hands, which the Pharisee stretches forth as a model statue of devotion. We strongly doubt whether it may be said that "the Publicans in Jerusalem were not so utterly godless, but that they remembered to go up to the temple at the time of prayer;" for these "sinners" had the reputation of not being hypocrites in their sinful life, and the appearance of a Publican in the temple might have been a very infrequent thing. The Pharisees were at home there, and their piercing glances would repel all whose thorough earnestness did not drive them to the house of prayer; and, as a rule, he also whose profound sense of need did not urge him would the rather absent himself, as his coming would never be imputed to him as an act of righteousness while he continued a "Publican." But this one has come under the mighty impulse of a *first repentance*, and as the whole makes evident, has gone up his sorrowful and burdened way; so much the more does the nearness of God in His sanctuary seize upon his spirit, so that it seems to him as if every man who beholds him sees into his sinful heart with the eyes of God Himself.[1] The concentrated pang of deepest shame so keenly afflicts him, that he, without well knowing what he does, adopts and uses the ceremony of repentance in profound sincerity—he *smites upon his breast*, as the people did afterwards under the cross (ch. xxiii. 48)—with the ancient expression of sorrow and

[1] Remark, that the Lord vindicates yet the sanctity of the temple as the house of prayer, and does not make the Publican pray there in secret. (Bahrdt was very infelicitous in his observation upon this; commending the Publican because, rejecting all positive religion, he is exhibited as uplifting his heart to the great Allfather, with an humble sense of human infirmity!)

bitterest complaint, see Nah. ii. 8, comp. with Lu. viii. 52, xxiii. 27 ; Matt. xi. 17. *Ubi dolor, ibi manus.* He has looked *inwardly*, and feels that God looks inwardly to his sinful *heart;* and therefore, as he will not lift up his eyes, so he will not open his mouth to recount and confess his individual *deeds*, the countless sins of his life: it does not enter his mind to come before God with an enumeration—This, and this, and this, *have I done!* For that might be, as, alas, it is with many—But other things I have not done, sometimes I have done good things, I am not altogether sin and evil; believe that, O God! Ah no! he does not even dare to say, in all the full bitterness of the word, what he most unconditionally avows and gives to be understood—I *am* a sinner. Τῷ ἁμαρτωλῷ—in this τῷ[1] there is not the comparison which cold observation has detected in it—τῷ καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ἁμαρτωλῷ. Oh no, he *makes no comparison* here! The Pharisee, although σταθεὶς πρὸς ἑαυτόν, casts his eyes around, to mark who was present to behold him; but the Publican has no glance to throw anywhere, he thinks of no other person under heaven. He is thus saved from the error of beginning to think—"Would that I were like other holy and righteous people, like this Pharisee!" "To the Pharisee all are sinners and he only is righteous; to the Publican all are righteous and he only *the sinner*."[2] There stands the great word in the parable, in all its luminous force, for ever uttering its mighty testimony from that broken and smitten heart; a word which the Pharisees pass by and never find, and which the disciples of Christ are tempted too often to forget to hold fast, as the Apostle Paul did, to the end of life—*I the sinner!*[3]

[1] Which Thomas Scott, on his death-bed, most impressively remarked upon. Alford (against Greswell, and without noticing Scott's life, which mentions the circumstance) denies any emphasis in this τῷ, with that philological tenacity which he sometimes manifests. The parallels to which he refers, ch. vi. 24 and xi. 46, are not decisive in his favour. At least ch. vi. 24 retains a similar emphasis; and the *singular* here is something quite different from the general distinction of a class by the article.

[2] Westermeier in his Fortsetzung der evangelischen Hauspostille von Uhle. Roos, too, says with great simplicity, and for our time almost prophetically—"The Publican does not say, I am a creature dependent upon God," etc., etc.

[3] We do not agree with Lange in his contradiction of this general view of the parable:—"The first repentance and conversion is not depicted

But before this word of *pentence* has escaped from his overcharged breast and come to his lips, his *faith* has already discovered how it may be uttered before God without despair. His *shame* is not *fear* or horror; for he, ignorant Publican as he was, has apprehended and understood better than the scripture-learned Pharisee, the gracious promises of the earlier covenant; and he has embraced them with his *heart*. *Be merciful to me!* Thus does he urge in his prayer, most probably without knowing it, the beginning of Ps. li., and in the selfsame spirit of penitence and faith. He places this between God and himself the sinner; and thus, with infinitely more boldness than he was conscious of, he perfectly fills up the wide gulf between. Whether in the expression used to that end, ἱλάσθητι (ἱλάσκεσθαι, *e.g.*, כִּפֶּר Heb. ii. 17), we have *here* intimated a *knowledge* on the part of the Publican of a "necessary propitiation" in order to the forgiveness of sins,[1] so that we may ground upon his words, as a locus classicus, our dogmatic theories, is exceedingly questionable. It is assuredly at first no more than the unbiassed apprehension in his correct feeling of the term of the Israelite phraseology for the forgiveness of sins, which *afterwards* his better knowledge might explain. As elsewhere the Sept. has ἀφιέναι, and very commonly ἵλεων εἶναι (see *e. g.* Heb. viii. 12), for סלח (condonare, properly disburthen, remove the load, cognate with סלא and סלל), so also we find it translating sometimes ἱλάσκεσθαι, as in Ps. xxv. 11; Dan. ix. 19. Let us not disturb, by our premature and inapprapriate *dogmatizing*, the incomparably profound and affecting unity of this most simple of all penitential prayers, which condenses into its heartfelt brevity the quintessence and sum of Ps. li., and which is either the easiest or the hardest

here, this Publican is already a man of prayer; all through his pious pilgrimage his petition would be ever for mercy, and even as a ripe believer would thus enter into the house of mercy, profoundly humble." Quite true, and beautiful as an application for us—but as the first meaning of the parable? The Lord makes use of well-known characters, when He speaks of a Pharisee, and a Publican; and no man would have thought of such a rare thing as a *pious publican*, ripe in faith! The whole representation assumes that he comes for the first time, and stands before God as a type, the sinner.

[1] Comp. *e.g.*, Sanders Papstthum, S. 35, according to which the Publican thinks of the typical mercy-seat in the Holiest:—hardly!

prayer, as it is apprehended by the *heart*. For the heart of such as this Publican it is for ever easy and obvious enough; almost the only perfectly sincere outpouring of the most internal sorrow and supplication of the wounded heart. One glance *upwards*, which the heart sends without the eyes—one glance *inwardly*, where *the sinner* has sinned against heaven and before God—one groan breathed upwards again—*nothing more*—brings down the reconciling grace for his justification: then can he joyfully *lift up* his eyes, and utter now his own *genuine*—God, I thank Thee!

Ver. 14. And now let us feel the sublime majesty of this Λέγω ὑμῖν in the mouth of the Son of man, as it indicates God's answer to the respective prayers of these men! "*I tell you*, for I know; I have seen, I have heard, all this, in many such a case, and in many such prayers." The Lord not only knoweth what is in man, but what also is in the heart and counsel of God concerning man; here He shows Himself to know what God worketh in men, and what He giveth to them. The Publican is *justified*, the sinner is acquitted and pardoned, as soon as and because he has sighed for it. The simple, and indeed singular, ἢ ἐκεῖνος is probably the true reading (quite corresponding to ch. xv. 7); but the MSS. have variously changed it for ἤπερ, ἢ γάρ, etc.; and many are even of opinion that παρ' ἐκεῖνον or ὑπὲρ ἐκεῖνον was originally found in the text. The γάρ which Griesbach admitted, would simply, according to Winer, indicate the question—*Or the other?* But this so entirely disturbs the emphatically *decisive* distinction between the two, that even Winer prefers the emendation ἤπερ. Suffice that its most obvious meaning is assuredly just the simple Hebrew מִן, and means to say—this man was justified before the other; that is, *the other was not!* For which Luther aptly compares Matt. xxi. 31. How could such a Pharisaical prayer as the one here described, attain to any kind of δικαιοῦσθαι? The man literally *supplicated* nothing, least of all justification! We cannot therefore imagine how von Gerlach can say that "all justification before God is not denied to the Pharisee, he is only placed below the Publican!" Was it then that he had only "little forgiven" in his thoughts, like that debtor in the other parable, which is incorrectly paralleled with this? When the *application* of the parable

can be safely detached from its original historical-typical figure, as it is described in the strongest lines by our Lord, and we can clearly discern how far the "Pharisee" may reappear among our Lord's own disciples, then shall we be able to see the milder force of the not undesigned *comparative* expression.[1] If a δεδικαιωμένος again *begins* to trust in his righteousness (Ezek. xxxiii. 13, πέποιθεν), the consciousness and the possession of justification begin to depart from him; and he recedes in comparison with the Publican who comes first before God. Therefore despise not such, and never forget that the same grace which ye have received is ready to be offered to the very first and faintest ἱλάσθητι of the most abandoned reprobate, with the same fulness of love which ye yourselves have experienced.

The contrast and conflict of the two great parties which our Lord so truly describes, goes on through all ages of the church and people of God:—the trusting in *works* and personal merit down to its most subtle forms, and the appeal to free, unconditional *grace*. Most assuredly our Lord takes one side in His decisive word; and as it respects the great demarcation of character before God, this alternative holds good in all its rigour. But we must be on our guard against perverting the parable, and ourselves distributing all men dogmatically, as they are actually found in various degrees of progress towards that great final demarcation, into the two classes, whose extremes stand here before us in their two exemplars! The young man, for example, who comes forward a few verses further on in the same chapter, who had kept the commandments, and to whom, nevertheless, something is lacking, is in truth neither like this Pharisee nor like this Publican, but his character is conceived as in the intermediate transition. Finally, in its deepest principle we think that they are not always "*two* different men" who thus "move onwards to the courts of the common temple;"[2]—but they oftentimes come together in one and the same man, so that the Pharisee and the Publican put up together one marvellous prayer. Not merely as Westermeier has it, "The mouth

[1] Which Tertullian reproduces—justificatior Pharisæo. Cyprian—magis quam ille.

[2] To use the language of a miserable hymn, which has been fabricated upon the words of our text.

often says—God I thank Thee! but the self-seeking heart turns round and gives itself the glory. The confession is—We are all sinners! at bottom, however, *all* are indeed sinners, but *ourselves* not." But in the poor *heart* itself the two voices conflict with one another long after regeneration, like the accusing and excusing in the natural conscience. And it is the masterpiece of the Divine grace to consummate at length the great distinction between the two: His μακροθυμία bears, forgives, and heals, even when as yet it does not find τὴν πίστιν, the pure trust and reliance upon the foundation of grace without any pharisaical corruption. It is *this* which the great utterance at the close is designed to teach us, concerning the being exalted and the being abased, which we have already expounded upon Matt. xxiii. 12, and Luke xiv. 11. In Luke xiv. it proceeded from the *expression* of pride or humility, but here their internal principle and *root* is disclosed; Matt. xxiii., however, shows for the warning of the disciples themselves, that the exaltation and abasement embraces a long process, and many various degrees, before the end of either is attained.

Another feature there is which must not be overlooked. The Publican *went down to his house*:—this is not intended simply to round off the narrative which commenced with their going up to the temple; but has a significance of its own. And, first of all, the Lord thereby commends, by a silent antithesis, the Publican's having sought God's consecrated *place* of prayer, and not having hastily sent up his prayer at his receipt of custom, or in his chamber. Or if the reader thinks commendation here too much, He does not blame him for it. Further, this κατέβη in its strait connection with δεδικαιωμένος indicates that the Lord refers to the *consciousness* of both, *in which* the one experiences and is sure of his justification, the other not. Thus the Pharisee goes down as he came, without having silenced that evil conscience which, in spite of all his candid pride, secretly troubled his peace; indeed there impends over his head, while he thus continues to exalt himself, a fearful humiliating blow which will finally alight upon his head, and crush him into the dust. But the Publican, although he returns to his old dwelling (that is, as a bye-thought, although he remains a *Publican*), goes on his way as a new man, no more a sinner! Justified at first, he is

therein, and it will be soon manifestly seen, sanctified also; furnished and ready now to say—God, I thank Thee, that Thou art merciful to me! In this gratitude he performs all good works, of which he had *promised* nothing, for grace now begins and goes on to exalt him. He gives to his God not a tenth merely, but all that he has, all the pleasant fruits which now grow in his new paradise. (Cant. iv. 17.)

THE TARRYING WITH ZACCHÆUS.

(Luke xix. 5, 9, 10.)

According to His design, the Lord had only passed through Jericho, as the διήρχετο of St Luke intimates at the beginning, thus harmonising the accounts of the *two* blind men whom He met on entering and on departing from the city,—see our remarks in Vol. ii. But, always seeking souls, a sinner suddenly arrests Him in His way; and in order to ensure the finding of this soul He very gladly interrupts His διέρχεσθαι to interpose His δεῖ με μεῖναι. And behold there was a man, ἀνήρ and not ἄνθρωπος, that is, a man of consequence, for he was a *chief among the Publicans*.[1] And the same man (Erasmus: et idem, in addition) was, as it appeared, *rich*—yet did he desire to see Jesus; and that not with Herod's curiosity, but with a longing after salvation which places him by the side of the Greeks in Jno. xii. 21. He was nearer to Jesus than those poor strangers at the feast, but has been long in beginning to concern himself

[1] We may leave it without damage uncertain, whether an actual farmer of the revenue, a *publicanus*, or only a chief receiver of the revenue (a comptroller who received the dues from the *portitoribus* and rendered them to the general-farmer). Although, according to the rule of the Romans, only a Roman Eques was generally a farmer of the revenue, yet we find in Josephus that Jews sometimes attained to that dignity—hence it was quite possible in the case of Zacchæus. (The Jewish name is found 2 Macc. x. 19; Ezra ii. 9; Nehem. vii. 14.) For the rest, Jericho, as a great mart and place of transport, and then on account of its dates and balsam (on which there was a special impost), might well be the seat of a general office of the Publicans.

about Jesus; his time, however, is now full come. It is strange that he had never yet become acquainted with the person of this friend of publicans, whose passage through that country so near to Jerusalem, must have been frequent; but we find that he would see τίς ἐστι, though the sequel shows that he was influenced by a deeper feeling than merely that. He is not poor, and not needing the Lord's help like the blind and the lame who fly to the Son of David for compassion; but his soul is the seat of that penitence of the publican which impels him to seek for grace. He must have *heard* much of the kindness and the strictness of this Jesus, who had not long before called Lazarus out of his grave;—but now he will and he must *see* Him for himself. And what then? The excellent Schubert (in the history of Jacob Häufer) does him injustice when he says that the desire of Zacchæus was to have a good view of Jesus. Probably it was his design afterwards to venture on such an approach as that of Nicodemus, or in some other such way as might suit him; what might follow was indistinct to his mind, *for the present* he would not intermingle with the company of His followers, certainly not press forward into the immediate presence of Jesus, for he does not presume to think of detaining the Lord who is passing through, by publicly and pressingly obtruding his own heart's need. Thus there is a befitting humility in this eminent man, who deems that an invitation to his house would not be honour enough for the Lord; a kind of diffidence of the right sort, the first commencement of a coming like Nicodemus from afar. At the beginning of His official career Nicodemus comes to the Lord from the high council, at the end of it Zacchæus comes from among the publicans. Zacchæus has *less* in him than Nicodemus, for he will merely at the first see, and not approach—so it *would seem;* nevertheless he has at the same time *more* than Nicodemus, and is more easily entirely won. The publicans enter before the pharisees, sinners before the righteous, and this is once more seen here! As a token of his inward earnestness, *better* than *Nicodemus*, Zacchæus comes in open day, in the middle of the town; although not in the presence of all the people (for he runs before), yet not without spectators, for the high official is not above climbing into a tree as one of the curious, sight-seeing multitude. As he was

little of stature, he thought that among the people (ἀπό like מִן instead of ἕνεκα) he could not attain his end;[1] there was no stone, no block, to help (as Pfenninger expresses himself), nor was it necessary, for there grew the sycamore tree just at hand.[2] He hastens to climb up, that he may have a secure place before the crowd comes; and thus behold Jesus, unmarked either by Him or by the multitude.

But he *is seen* by Him, who also beheld a Nathanael under the fig-tree. When Jesus came to the place, *He looked up*—why did He this, for there was no imaginable occasion to do so? *He was sensible of his presence there*—as Luther's translation has it, but the εἶδεν (like the ἰδών, ver. 41) includes a *looking* before the descrying. The Lord perceives the man who was as much as possible concealed, penetrates the secret of his heart, calls him by name, invites Himself to his house:—now the Lord was not accustomed in such journeyings to look up into all the trees, or to offer His visits to those who were wont to gaze at Him from their branches. Thus it is not "petty and foolish, to seek anything wonderful in all this" (as Schleiermacher scrupled not before his auditory to say); but there is in it a real wonder of grace, the guiding providence of the Father guiding a soul to His seeking Son. The Lord might indeed in the ordinary way have known the *name* of this chief among the publicans, and might indeed have seen and remarked the man who nevertheless knew Him not;[3] but that He should now look up, and find him in the tree, still more that He should penetrate his heart in order

[1] How often does the multitude hide from us the person of Christ! The multitude of the indifferent, the followers without earnestness, the watching enemies! These are the true *little of stature*, however lofty and great, who are so "petty of spirit, that they cannot even leave the crowd, in order to see and to seek the Lord." (Gossner.)

[2] The sycamores are not very high (that would have been unsuitable in this case), and therefore all the easier to ascend; hence travellers report that they are often resorted to for pleasure, and beds hung among their leaves. Gossner says further—"Little soul, is there then no tree grown for thee, which thou mayest ascend, and thine eyes behold Him who bringeth *salvation* to thine heart?"

[3] That he acquired the man's name (as Neander thinks possible) from the people standing round, having observed him casually, is not to be supposed:—any such interposed question cannot be conceived of in the account,

in so extraordinary a manner to offer him salvation, surpasses most assuredly what is purely natural. *Zacchæus!* Thus He calleth one of His sheep by name, crying into his inmost heart —I *know* thee, I know what thou desirest! Thus does He summon the diffident man with wholesome promptitude to announce his decision before all the people; and overpowering his fear, *invites Himself* to the house to which He had not been invited, thus anticipating in His grace the desire of the man who had not dared even to draw near![1] *Make haste*, and come down. Not altogether without a gracious though slight blame of the strange method which he had taken; we may indeed symbolically generalise the words:—"Leave all thy own inventions and devices in thy fearful coming—*I come Myself to thee!*" Climbing up and coming down, everything has its time! Zacchæus had gone before in haste, but the Lord is more in haste than he; for there would be no time for any later visit, this was the last passing through Jericho, and now was the time for one last testimony before His entrance into Jerusalem, one final public testimony to all the people before His passion, in the conversion of a publican. I will come to thee *at thy house*, where thou wilt better see Me and hear Me; I will *tarry*, and interrupt My journey by resorting to thy dwelling! (Μεῖναι, equivalent to καταλῦσαι, ver. 7.) Not merely I *will*, but *I must*. What *dignity* in answer to every objection of precipitation and surprise in this σπεύσας and δεῖ; and at the same time what an impulse of *love*, which testifies that it must be so, that it is bound thus to tarry in the way! For it is in the Lord's commission to act thus, as it is stated afterwards in ver. 10.

Zacchæus is not terrified, protests nothing good or evil, is no longer ashamed; but he is instantly won, and with *joy* receives his high guest, whom he may lead to his home. Each had found what each sought—the Saviour and the sinner. But that the Good Shepherd has found a stray lamb, that the Merciful One should now begin again to exhibit His mercy, excites new mur-

which gives the looking, the seeing, and the address, simply. Any such, "What is that man's name?" would be altogether inconsistent with the dignity of the everywhere typical conduct of our Lord.

[1] The only case in which we *read* this, but not, probably, the only instance in which it so occurred.

muring among all the beholders of this remarkable scene; that is, of course, only among that *all* which was composed of mere beholders, those who were accompanying Him, ch. xviii. 39, and the inhabitants of Jericho. "He is gone to be guest with a man that is a *sinner!*" Oh wretched and blind people, tc murmur at *that!* An ἀνήρ, but yet an ἁμαρτωλός because a publican, and even a chief among the publicans—there is the deep-seated delusion of the people, condemning the whole class without any respect to the character of the person. On another occasion they might have spoken more respectfully of an ἀρχιτελώνης, but now, as it has to do with Jesus, he is no more tc them than a τελώνης καὶ ἁμαρτωλός.

The narrative, which is itself hastening towards Jerusalem, leaves it to be understood that between vers. 7 and 8, we are to interpose the whole time of the καταλῦσαι; for Zacchæus cannot have advanced so far as to speak as he did, before the Lord's visit, and as it were precipitately at the very door. There is more than this presupposed, also, in the εἰσῆλθε, and in ver. 11, just as in ver. 28, the journey is regarded as continuing. Schleiermacher thought, like many before him and after, that the καταλῦσαι must be taken as a tarrying over night (which the people hastily presumed when they spoke); and consequently that it was on the next morning that the proceeding of ver. 8 took place.[1] But the σήμερον, ver. 5, did not stand in such close connection with the μεῖναι as this assumes; rather must we regard the σήμερον, both of ver. 5 and ver. 9, as indicating that one and the same day of grace which had come to Zacchæus and his house, and which was so prominently intimated already in ver. 5.[2] A sojourn through the night would scarcely have been so hastily dismissed in the σταθεὶς δέ; and ver. 28 continues the record of the διήρχετο after the interruption with a definite ἔμπροσθεν.

But what must the Lord have spoken in the house of Zacchæus, whether His visit were for one hour or many! This host certainly acted more like Mary than Martha; for with what confidence of new life does he stand forth, after salvation has come to him! "With one that is a *sinner*—do the people say? Yea, verily I

[1] Many even add that it was the Sabbath, and a day of rest.

[2] This Neander urges against Schleiermacher.

have been a sinner, but He, whom ye blame for not having despised me, hath taught me righteousness." Thus as a new-born child he justifies the wisdom of God, thus does he bring the quickly matured fruit of a still repentance which had received the blessing of grace, in a public avowal of penitence, of faith, of new-found righteousness. He does not address the mockers—for whose sake, however, now at the close, he speaks these words, not within the house, but outside (*ἀκουόντων αὐτῶν* ver. 11)—but his new *Lord*, from whom he cannot separate himself, whom he joyfully calls his Lord, and in whose honour, and to whose praise he now makes his vow before the people. In his wealth there is much unrighteous mammon, and much of other men's goods, the restitution of which in the proper place must be ever impossible; his conscience teaches him what the parable which he had not heard had counselled to converted publicans. Not indeed all that he had, but yet the half he gives to the poor: *δίδωμι* is distinctive; it is as good as if done, for he now assumes an obligation before the whole town, the poor of which will soon claim its fulfilment. And if I have taken anything *by false accusation*,[1] I restore *fourfold!* and for meeting his official responsibilities, as the Lord had not called him from his office, he retains the other half. It is quite clear that the *εἴ τινός τι* does *not* involve anything like a bold challenge (as 1 Sam. xii. 3), or even express a doubt whether any such could come forward: but, on the other hand, it is equally clear that he is not conscious of overreaching having been his *common* practice, and it is his intention conscientiously to watch against it in such matters as had afforded occasion for it in his earlier thoughtlessness. In every case in which I have overreached, I will make compensation; if I have done it (alas, indeed, sometimes), here let a new righteousness begin! Now, then, he is a righteous man according to Ezek. xxxiii. 15. Now does he voluntarily and joyfully determine to do more than what the law, which grace does not supersede, requires of him.[2]

[1] *Συκοφαντεῖν*, usual in Sept. for נשׁך, retains here as in chap. iii. 14 the subordinate idea of apparent right; connected with self-interested information or denouncing.

[2] The reference to a Roman lex de furto which prescribed fourfold restitution disturbs the significance of this beautiful saying, and is not strictly

The Lord answers, as He was addressed,—*πρὸς αὐτόν*, actually speaking to Zacchæus; but with an indirectly expressed testimony to those who are around, He confirms in His good pleasure the confession and vow; rather He crowns it by the fullest assurance which He now gives, putting it upon its right foundation, and at the same time appends a *testimony* to His own *Person*. The new righteousness of the sinner has a good *foundation*—thus must we understand the not unmeaning *ὅτι*.[1] *Salvation* is come, for the Saviour has entered; hence there is joy in the tabernacles of the righteous. (Ps. cxviii. 15.) Again there is almost an open—*I am He!* almost a gracious illustration now in the last days of His life of His *name of Jesus*. *This day*, forsooth, for other days will now soon come; at the same time, *now first to-day* the day of grace hath dawned upon this man and his house! It was before—To-day I must abide *in thy house;* this is not all that the expression now involves, but it gives an intimation to Zacchæus, that he must henceforth guide his whole house to salvation and peace; comp. ch. x. 5, 6, and what was said upon Matt. x. 13, 14, in Vol. ii. The reference to the *house* as the foundation, as of human, so of political life generally, and of the *church* to be raised up, begins thus early to occur in the Lord's discourses, and then runs through the entire New Testament. Do ye despise him as a publican? But I say unto you —*he was yet a lost sheep* of the house of *Israel*, though given up by you in your loveless bigotry, having his own claim to the Messiah, the Shepherd:[2] and now he *is* in truth through faith a *recovered*, renewed, and genuine *son of Abraham*. (Comp. ch. xiii. 16.)[3] The Son of man is come for Israel, and indeed for

pertinent, since there was a lex de publicanis which was content with the restitution of the simplum, after the expiration of a year. The law of Moses (Ex. xxii.) requires only in a special case, ver. 1, fivefold and fourfold restitution (hence 2 Sam. xii. 6); else, as in vers. 4, 9, only a doubling was required in compensation, just as was customary in Athens. This Zacchæus goes beyond, and doubles again.

[1] "*Just because* this day salvation has come to this house!" Lange.

[2] I have not gone in to a *Gentile!*

[3] This view of the losing and finding again justifies the *second* sense, without any necessity for a *γέγονε* having been used. Most strangely did Erasmus refer the *αὐτός* (in which the *ἁμαρτωλός ἀνήρ* of ver. 7 is evidently made prominent) to *οἴκῳ*, translating—eo quod et ipsa (domus) filia sit Abrahæ!

the world at large, not only to *save the lost* sinners generally as ye all are, and those given up as lost by yourselves (as this publican was), but also to *seek* them, to enter in unto them before they can invite Him or *receive* Him. Thus we may dogmatically say, in a sense not to be unconditionally exaggerated, that "compassionate love effects as well the beginning of the higher life as its full consummation, so that all is its work." But we have already declared in relation to this utterance, and now freely repeat it, that God *seeks* in man something which comes to meet His eternal love with the susceptibility of receiving it, and with all His seeking is far from always finding it, and consequently that it is not always produced by Him.[1]

PARABLE OF THE SERVANTS OF THE NOBLEMAN WHO GOES AWAY TO RECEIVE A KINGDOM.

(Ch. xix. 12–27 [Matt. xxv. 14–30.])

The disciples themselves were involved in the erroneous ideas of ver. 11; and that notwithstanding all the Lord's declarations concerning His impending passion: see ch. xviii. 34. The Lord

[1] We may be permitted in a note to remark upon the wise and comprehensive discrimination which selected the history of Zacchæus for the Gospel of Consecration-day, in connection with the Epistle, Rev. xxi. 1–5. In the latter we have the consummation of salvation in the new world, the tabernacle of God, of which all houses of God typically prophesy; in the former, the gentle commencement of salvation in the individual, in the midst of the confusion of the old world, in the hastening of the Redeemer to His cross. There all is new and openly revealed, here we have the new heart with its first confession wrought by secret grace. There is the tabernacle of God, here our own house, whose best guest is the Son of man abiding in it. There we have the word of preparation for the bride's throne, here the first call of the Saviour for the seeking of the lost. What would be this salvation, if it did not come to me and my house? This is the beginning to that end—behold the tabernacle of God among men! Hence also the intimation to press through the interposing tumult of the people, to press forward to Jesus Himself; the exhortation to charity to the poor; the mention of external sonship, the priority of the seed of Abraham; and finally, in the background, the warning of judgment against the *old* Jerusalem. Two exhaustive ecclesiastical Pericopæ!

therefore adds a public and plain parable in connection with His public departure from Zacchæus; not the only instance of eschatological discourses, first pronounced in a wider circle, and then reiterated to the disciples: see Lu. xii. 36–46. Jesus has just testified (not in the house of Zacchæus, but at his door, where the people, not having dispersed when He entered in, were awaiting His egress, comp. ver. 28) for what purpose He had come, and what was the true σωτηρία for the children of Abraham. And as they heard *such things*, so contradictory to all their expectations of the Messiah, He appends to this utterance before the people a parable, which should be also an appendix to all the previous announcements of His passion and departure which the disciples had heard. *This* is the meaning of προσθεὶς εἶπε and ταῦτα; the latter is not intended to indicate that He had previously continued to speak on the subject. The excitement of expectation is strained to the utmost by His public approach to Jerusalem, where His avowed enemies were gathered to wait for Him; and He speaks of His coming death but as a setting out on a journey from which He will return. Thus He shows how this first coming of the Son of man to seek the lost, this coming of salvation into the hearts and houses of penitent sinners, is related to the expected *kingdom* of Him who was to come. He gives, further, to the converted Zacchæus, an admonition similar to that which He had given to the converted publicans in the parable of the steward; only that as his conversion had been a deeper fact, and he had already, by anticipation, dealt rightly before all men with his unrighteous mammon, the Lord at once passes over to the administration of spiritual goods, which in that parable (ch. xvi. 10–12) had only been hinted at. The ἐν ἐλαχίστῳ πιστός here, ver. 17, is intended to recall that discourse; just as we have the *cities* here instead of the habitations or tents there.

When in Matt. xxv., after a short interval only, the Lord repeats what is here said to His Apostles, we must understand Him as impressively intimating:—It still holds good, and ye must not forget what I said before in Jericho to all the people and yourselves! And in St Matthew the delivery to the servants on occasion of the setting out becomes an actual fact, while here it is a prophecy. This relation of the two discourses,

as well as all the fundamental ideas of the essentially similar parables, we have already discussed upon St Matthew. The side-glance at the punishment of the citizens who protested against His dominion, as well as His entrance upon His kingdom, is there omitted; and these, with the other variations of the parable, have their profound significance, as we have already shown.

Ver. 12. Is Εὐγενής, private man of eminent lineage, not a βασιλεύς by birth, and his βασιλεία therefore a subordinate jurisdiction? Assuredly not, but the word contains a concealed μείωσις with reference to His heavenly origin. The kingdom here spoken of belongs to the Son of God, a born King, as an Allodium; it is, on the other hand, a Feudum which the *Son of man* is to receive: there remains the testimony, too, that in the person of this Son of man these δοκοῦντες (ver. 11) have actually before them their future King. Nothing is said here of a going away to receive a kingdom *in another place*, in heaven (as Roos mistakes); but it is a departure in order to receive the crown and return. The groundwork of this part of the parable is derived from the political relations between the power of the house of Herod and the superior authority of Rome. Herod, under the government of Antigonus, journeyed to Rome, primarily and ostensibly seeking the βασιλεία for Aristobulus, but was himself consecrated king in the Capitol (amid idolatrous rites!), and after three years of troubled war, obtained possession of the kingly authority with which he had been invested—an exceptional instance—as no more than a private εὐγενής. And, more to the point, his son Archelaus, mentioned in his will, went first to Rome, where the emperor adjudicated between his claims and the claims of Antipas, mentioned in a previous will. But the Lord's kingdom is confirmed before the highest throne on manifold grounds of right:—as the Son of man He is invested or rewarded with the crown, for His worthiness' sake; as the Son of David He receives the patrimonial heritage, which belonged to Him from eternity as the Son of God by right of eternal birth. The going away to heaven, to the Father, is a πορεύεσθαι εἰς χώραν μακράν; for that world is an actual region opposed to this, and we cannot but think of ch. xv. 13, where the departure of the son from his father's

house into the world is similarly described. Not merely is "heaven, to many confessors of Christ, a *far*, unknown, indifferent land" (as Lisco here preaches); but Christ Himself anticipated the hard journey of *death* through the rent veil of His flesh.

Ver. 13. It has been already remarked that the ten of *His* (collective) servants is equivalent to the article in Matt. xxv. 14, and has the same meaning, as also in the case of the ten virgins; Schleiermacher incorrectly supposes that these servants might not be the highest, and not the only ones. Every one who adheres, in fidelity and obedience, to the future King, and thus is distinguished from the opposing citizens, is in the widest sense His servant and true minister; and is entrusted with office and work in the preparation of His kingdom. Hence it is not the Twelve whom the Lord mentions; for then the people would have thought of the Apostles, and Zacchæus would have deemed himself excluded. In the meantime the departing Lord puts into the hands of His adherents a little authority and a slight gift, *as the test of fidelity;* and this appears under the *figure* (almost like a parable within a parable) of a sum of money to be traded with.[1] The question may arise whether the μνᾶ is the Hebrew mina of a hundred shekels, or the Attic of a hundred drachms (about £3 of our money); but the parallel of the talents, and the general selection in the parables of money then current, are in favour of the latter. In relation to the Lord and κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν δύναμιν every one received alike; in relation to others there is a difference in each case:—and this is indicated by the variation in the parable as repeated. "Occupy, trade till I *come*—in power, judgment, and recompense;" emphatically said in contradistinction from—*till I return.* So at least in the common reading; more properly it is, perhaps, ἐν ᾧ ἔρχωμαι—*While* I am departing and returning, while I am on my journey.

Ver. 14. These lesser gifts, to be used in calm diligence, the

[1] Πραγματεύεσθαι is found as the peculiar expression for commerce in the Rabbinical פְּרַגְמַטְיָא, πραγματεία (even Eccles. v. 9, etc., in the Targum), פְּרַגְמָטִין, πραγματεύς, פְּרַגְמַטְיוֹס, πραγματευτής, etc. The conjecture of Michaelis, who detects an error in the translation for מָנוֹת portiones, is refuted by vers. 16 and 18.

King has apportioned to His faithful ones; instead of *weapons*, against the rebellious people, who will not bear His dominion, and whom He bears with for a long time, till His return. Sincerus Bibliophilus (Die Leipziger Religionsfrage: Wie dünket euch um die Höllensfahrt Christi? Magdeburg 1844) finds *here* the descensus ad inferos intimated, and understands by the far country the region of the dead—but this is a well-meaning error. The above is the only view which suits the *receiving* of the βασιλεία, the establishment of which is regarded as upon earth. Elsewhere the Lord has hinted at the descent into hell, as in Matt. xii. 40, and most plainly in ver. 29. The confused state of the Jewish land, split up into factions, and vexed with partizanship, had led to a deputation of fifty persons being sent to Augustus to complain, though vainly, against Archelaus—(who had restored the country wasted in war, especially round Jericho, where he had built himself a stately palace): and thus does the Lord illustrate the enmity of His people, of the πολῖται of His βασιλεία, as being a solemn and formal protest sent against Himself to the throne of God! There was in ver. 7 an outbreak of this enmity, which would not have the *Saviour of sinners* (οὗτος, ch. xv. 2) for the Messiah; but here the Lord signifies the utmost daring of their contradiction after His own death (ὀπίσω αὐτοῦ), the opposition of Jerusalem especially to the apostolical witness:—this reaches the presence of God,[1] and is regarded by Him as a πρεσβεία, is received at once, and rejected. We must note the scornful τοῦτον, and the οὐ θέλομεν which gives no reason for their complaint—"He is contrary to us, he is not a persona grata, we *hate* him, for all his love!"

Vers. 15–19. See upon St Matthew the notes upon what recurs there. The ἐπανελθεῖν καί involves in itself an obvious ἐγένετο, for the supreme liege Lord, the Father of the Son, receives not, like Pilate, the protest of those who hate His Son. But He having received the kingdom, does not at once return in all His authority to take vengeance upon His enemies; but graciously judges and rewards first His own especial servants, dependents, and confessors. Oh that He had only to praise and

[1] This feature in the parable refutes the exegesis of the little book before mentioned—which in itself may be highly recommended. What would be a protest sent to Hades?

reward! The διαπραγματεύεσθαι, which only occurs here in the New Testament, means elsewhere—to propose, undertake, arrange, and execute a plan, but passed naturally like *negotiari* into the meaning of *negotiando lucrari;* just as we might say—what *business* each had carried on. And, with reference to the verbum simplex in ver. 13, we might attribute to the διά the additional idea—what each had carried on *in the meanwhile,* through the whole intervening time. The faithful servants humbly and rightly ascribe the increase, not to themselves, but to the Lord's pound—προσειργάσατο, "See what Thy seed has grown to!" But the Lord did not seek the τόκος for Himself, as He might seem to do by His accommodating Himself to the delusion of the slothful one (ver. 23); but the diligent retain their acquisition, and receive a great reward besides. (Let the designedly striking τὸ ἀργύριον of ver. 15 be rightly understood, and further the ἵνα γνῷ—that He might know how each had acted therewith.) In St Matthew the first dispensation of gifts is various, and the reward of increase the same in all; here, on the contrary, the pounds are the same in the case of all the ten, but the reward is different. And this is a significant variation for the two sides of the question, according as the difference of the result depends upon more or less diligence, or otherwise springs from equal diligence in the use of differing gifts. The *former* is made prominent here, and therefore the second does not receive, as in Matt. xxv. 21, 23, similar commendation with the first, but merely a brief καὶ σὺ γίνου. That which is elsewhere promised generally to the ὑπομένοντες as a συμβασιλεύειν (2 Tim. ii. 12), appears here as a manifold gradation of dignity, for the more mediate future of the kingdom is here spoken of.[1] The *cities,* the government, the administration of which the King now distributes to His tested and approved servants (much more than the receiving into habitations), are indeed in the territory of the rebels which has nevertheless become His kingdom; and consequently indicate a further continuance of their active service, in the analogy of their former service, in the established and manifested kingdom. On the one hand, this distinguishes it

[1] "Ten minæ would scarcely purchase a house; and the superabundant recompense of grace is ten cities!" (V. Gerlach.)

from the final consummation of all in equal glory; but, on the other, it may not be said that even now "the servants are appointed to rule over the hosts of the enemies of Christ." For the enemies are already destroyed, rooted out of the land; there remains between them and the servants only the great middle-class of the undecided, hitherto not led to salvation; among whom the true "vicegerents of Christ" will have enough to do, while they are spreading the holy land over all the earth. Rev. ii. 26, xx. 4 (Ps. cxlix. 6–9, in a *good* sense). It will be easy, peaceful, and blessed work with them, to rule, and feed, and guide home the remaining sheep, when the wolf is gone, and Satan is bound!

Vers. 20–26. References to wrapping up and depositing money or other precious things in handkerchiefs are frequent enough; what *might* be subordinately hinted at, over and above this use, in the σουδάριον, we have mentioned already in Vol. iii.; though the word, its etymology being forgotten, designates a handkerchief of any kind. J. v. Müller's note "this is the body"—may be regarded as trifling, just as is Chrysostom's interpretation of the earth in Matt. xxv., as the earthly sensual heart. The indolent leaving unused, the foolish hiding up, is the gist of the figure. The judging of the wicked servant out of his own mouth and confession, generally a common principle of justice (Job xv. 6; 2 Sam. i. 16), has an application here different from that of Matt. xii. 37; for here it is the mildest judgment, which, accommodating itself to the position of the defence, finds the crimination even in that. The παρεστῶτες are essentially ministers of the King distinct from these servants, who execute His commandments, and who are brought with Him; that these venture the objection—Lord, he hath already ten pounds (and ten cities besides!), is not to be attributed to oblique envy, but to mere astonishment at the strangeness of the judgment. Thereby the great distinguishing principle which follows in ver. 26 is only prepared for and made prominent; and in such a manner that the Lord Jesus makes a sudden transition, in the interpretation of all, to Himself as the βασιλεύς.

Ver. 27. *Thus, in His own person*, majestically making the prediction present, He pronounces now this judicial sentence upon His enemies; instead of which we significantly find, on the

repetition of the parable in the circle of the disciples, the (here presupposed) casting out of the unprofitable servant. "*My* enemies, citizens who should be My subjects, who consequently are rebels against My *βασιλεία*—My hand now findeth them out! (Ps. xxi. 9.) They *would not* My dominion unto their *salvation*—I judge them out of their own mouth." (Chap. xiii. 34.) But this involves a most fearful irony, for there is another *βασιλεῦσαι* which they must endure! "Since they would not have the Lamb, the Lion will tear them."

And when *He had thus spoken*, had thus judicially in His own revealed royal person decreed the destruction of His foes—He went onward to Jerusalem, there to deliver Himself up as the paschal Lamb into their hands!

THE ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM: THE STONES CRYING OUT. THE GREAT DESTRUCTION.

(Luke xix. 40, 42–44.)

We have already explained upon Matt. xxi. 2, 3, and must here assume as known, the design and significance of the Lord's kingly entrance into Jerusalem, this first and last public and festal proclamation of His coming and honour;—as partly intentional on His own part, and partly permitted with regard to others. Some, the most audacious, of the Pharisees, although they do not venture themselves to suppress the voices of the multitude of His disciples, reinforced by the multitudes of the people, yet appeal to Himself and require Him—not to permit such impropriety! Not so much that "they were filled with anxiety, lest the great outbreak should take place at once," but with infatuated, scornful bitterness:—"Suffer not thyself to be called that which thou art not! Take heed to thyself, we warn thee of the shame and the punishment which the beginning will involve!" For all this He has the right answer at hand. "Should *these* whom ye call My disciples, but all of whom I do not reckon as such, as they now encompass Me with shouts—keep silence? I say *unto you*,—you who not only hold your peace, but even protest—it is nevertheless the voice of truth in

their mouth, this loud testimony, so hateful to you, is decreed for this time, it must be so and for your sakes! This blind people—Oh that they were all My true disciples and subjects! —know not what they cry,[1] but are constrained to bear their witness this day. Therefore, I tell you—lacking them the stones *must* cry out, would proclaim in your stead and in theirs, what the great question is between Me and Jerusalem!"[2] This is, primarily, a common proverbial expression, similarly humiliating as in Matt. iii. 9; comp. 2 Pet. ii. 16. "Are *ye* then of stone, that ye feel not the truth, and harmonise not with it?" Yet we are not to understand in the λίθοις, "even the most obtuse" (according to Neander), stony hearts to be aroused; still less (according to v. Gerlach) that God, if humanity remained insensible, would give to inanimate nature hearts and voices for His praise; or, as Hess puts it in the strongest way, "these stones around, which have witnessed so many of My deeds, echo of themselves My honour and My praise!" But the indication, immediately following, of the *stones* of the temple and of Jerusalem to be destroyed, ver. 44, gives us the right clue to our Lord's meaning when He uses the prophetic future:—"*These* will soon cease with their *Hosanna*, without any injunction of Mine, they will soon exchange it for *Crucify Him!* fulfilling your desire, and obviating the danger you fear—but *then* will there arise a very different witness to My kingly power, which will cry out very differently against your unbelief!" For in the background of this proverb there lies a hint of a saying in the Scripture, which we must consult in connection with this passage.

The prophet Habakkuk, after he has announced, in ch. ii. 4, life to the just by faith, and the opposite to all proud opposers, when *He that cometh* will come without delay,[3] turns in ver. 5 to

[1] Not "seized by a *sacred* inspiration," else we should have to understand this word as a prophecy from Divine impulse.

[2] The Fut. 3. Pass. κεκράξονται is in this verb the usual form instead of the unused regular form; as in other cases, when the Perf. acquires the signification of the Present, it is also used,—formed from the dor. verb. κεκράγω. Hence it is not necessary or proper to refer to the Attic signification of this paullo-post future—it should and it must so be. (Erasmus: mox clamabunt.)

[3] See my exposition of this passage, as cited in Heb. x. 37, 38, in the Hebräerbrief, ii. 74.

the prediction of judgment upon Babylon, yet in such a manner as to include in his far-reaching threatenings a denunciation of similar doom upon unbelieving and unjust Israel. What woe should then break in upon the empire of robbery, upon the magnificence founded upon spoil; how should then the fearful account be demanded! For עַבְטִיט, ver. 6, is not thick clay or mud, according to the Syr. and Vulg. (as also it is rendered עב של טיט in the Rabbin. Commentaries), but as the Targumist rightly expresses it—תְּקוּף חוֹבִין pigneratio, copia æris alieni quod quis contraxit. Now must the spoil be rendered back; suddenly rise up נֹשְׁכֶיךָ, that is, with prophetical double-meaning—those who bite thee, and thy creditors! Thou shalt be robbed of that which thou hast robbed—in righteous recompense. The nest on high is not secure enough. Ver. 10 says—Thou hast consulted shame to thine house, brought disgrace wilfully upon thyself, by cutting off many people; thou hast thereby *sinned against thy soul* (comp. Prov. viii. 36), or, thine own soul, thou thyself hast sinned, and incurred this penalty—which better suits vers. 4 and 5. And now for the words of ver. 11: For the stone (each one) shall cry out of the wall, and the crossbeams of the woodwork shall answer it, agreeing to testify against thee! These are not the stones and the beams of the cities laid waste by Babylon, which complain against the destroyer (as in Sallust the devastated walls, and burnt beams of Saguntum *manus Punicas ostentabant*), but the firm and well-built stones and beams of the house, vers. 9, 10, built in wickedness, of the city, ver. 13, established in vanity and bloodguiltiness,—"proclaim the guilt and shame of their original." They should cry out and witness (comp. ch. ii. 2); and that not merely as poscentes justitiam a Deo ut suo loco restituantur (as Burk quotes), but in the laying waste of their bootless labour (ver. 13), when the individual stone comes out כְּקִיר, and every beam כְּעֵץ, they will cry out; and the doom will bear witness of the guilt! But the Lord will then appear in His holy temple, that all the earth may keep silence before Him! ver. 20. Let it be observed, then, with what profound significance the Lord uses this expression to indicate the destruction of this Jerusalem, transformed as it were into *Babylon;* how in this preliminary word He already announces the judgment which presently comes distinctly before His contemplation.

The jubilant cry had begun when the procession reached the *κατάβασις* of the Mount of Olives; the Lord comes now nearer and nearer to the *city*, as it is here termed not without emphasis, the holy city, the city of God in its external glory. He beholds it from that very position where afterwards it was beleaguered by its enemies, at a similar paschal feast. His eyes, which everywhere look for faith, which had looked through its streets and into its sanctuary for faith in vain, now *behold* the city near, and in its *naked reality*. No external appearances of glory, where the way of *peace* is not known, can deceive Him; no Hosanna of His disciples can give Him joy, for thus cometh He not and the kingdom of God. In the midst of the acclamations, which He does not repress, *His* heart breaks out in lamentation over the people of this city and the city of this people—Have I been so long with you and ye have not known Me! Do ye thus surround Me with Hosannas, who will so soon crucify Me? Not that a "silent flow of sorrowful tears mingles with the general festivity;" not merely that He *ἐδάκρυσεν*, as in Jno. xi. 35; but much more than that, He *ἔκλαυσεν*, *weeping* with the lamentation of consummate sorrow, and *ἐπ' αὐτήν*! It is said in the letter of Lentulus that Christ never *laughed*, and we could believe that; *weep* indeed He did, much oftener than we know of. At the grave of Lazarus the Lord saw Mary weeping, and the Jews who were with her weeping too; but here He alone is the weeper amid the universal joy. But now, as then, He thinks not of His own honour or of His own sorrow; the tears of the sympathising High Priest even now, before Gethsemane, concern our sins, which are His sorrow and His heart's deepest woe. "The man of God wept"—that was a great thing as said of Elisha, when he beheld in spirit the evil which Hazael would inflict upon Israel. (2 Kings viii. 11.) The Son of God wept over the guilt and doom of Jerusalem and her children—and that is infinitely greater, a *μυστήριον προφορικόν*, to which corresponds an *ἐνδιάθετον* in the depths of the *σπλάγχνα οἰκτιρμῶν τοῦ θεοῦ*. Love, after doing all in vain, can only weep; were God to become man, He could but do this; rather God is man here and therefore weeps.[1] In what multitudes of His members

[1] Compare the beautiful observation of v. Gerlach, against the error of universal restoration, as against the other error of predestination. Jesus

upon earth have these tears since continued to flow! And "how many have been converted by these tears of our Lord, in the place of those who would not then convert!"

Ver. 42. Passion permits no parable, as Hess remarks, and mighty indeed is the passion which seizes the Lord's heart, when He first looks upon the scene of the events which were then to transpire. But the first, and the predominant question, is *lamentation;* just as in Matt. xxiii. the undertone of lamenting love is heard even amidst the predominant anger against those who would not be saved. The construction of the former clause with ὅτι and εἰ together is to be narrowly observed. The ὅτι, coming first, gives, as it were, an answer to the astonishment of those who saw and heard Him weep:—*Therefore* I weep, *that* is the cause of my tears! The εἰ is evidently equivalent to *utinam*, as in the Sept. for לוּ, and as in Lu. xii. 49, xxii. 42. Luther's translation by *wenn* (if) involves the easily perverted, and often abused idea, that apology, and not accusation, is to be sought here. In truth, this is a lamentation, the bitterness of which is its accusation. Nor is it right to say that our Lord *here* regards their guilt "in its mildest form as ignorance," for He has already spoken in ver. 27 of their *not willing* and their refusal; consequently He here means no other than wilful, self-condemned ignorance—else wherefore the terrific judgment? Ah *if* thou hadst known—only then wouldst thou have escaped the judgment—then could I have saved thee from it! *Even thou* entire Jerusalem—is this in contrast with the multitudes of disciples who were greeting Him as their King?[1] Scarcely: for even these Hosannas were not the result of a real *knowledge*, and it is this word which has here the emphasis. Or does the Lord oppose the preeminently corrupt inhabitants of the metropolis (as Hess thought), to the Israelites who followed Him from Galilee and the land generally? We think not, for to us this καί involves no such comparison. The Lord is thinking altogether and only of the *city* over which He weeps, as the elect

did not weep through "shortsighted grief," instead of contemplating the ultimate disappearance of all sin and all misery. Rather does He give expression to God's sorrow over the lost!

[1] Or—Thou also, as thy King. (So Lange, though far-fetched and confused on the whole passage.)

metropolis and nevertheless the murderess of the prophets, about to reject and slay the Messiah Himself. The first καὶ consequently signifies—O that thou *especially*, whom it concerns and who needed it so much! (for even *thou*, or it is no other than thou who art blind!) The following καίγε then adds—And *truly*, or even now *at least* in this day of final invitation! In this *thy day*. To interpret ἡμέρα as merely *time*, is also inexact; for although all the ἡμέραι τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου constituted one great time of grace "for which two thousand years had been preparing" (Tholuck), a καιρὸς τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς as afterwards more generally embraced in ver. 44, yet the Lord had now in His soul this one last day of gracious offer, the day of His entrance into Jerusalem as a King into His own city—not without allusion to Ps. cxviii. 24. This was *thy* day; then came thy King to thee yet once more in meekness, as the Prince of peace, offering peace to thee:—and yet thou remainedst in thy enmity, discernedst not τὰ πρὸς εἰρήνην σου, and knewest not to be the true Salem of thy Melchizedek![1] Oh what could not the Lord have done, what achievements wrought, with this excited people, had He only become, but not in righteousness, *their* King and their Messiah! But it was not this which would subserve their peace—this He *knows*, but not they! Therefore they plunge themselves into ruin through their foes, instead of receiving His peace. This last and vainly obtesting lamentation repeats now at the end what Moses in the beginning (Deut. xxxii. 28, 29) had proclaimed and denounced against this people. But now it is hidden from thine *eyes*—although thou seest with thine eyes "thy King riding upon an ass"—although thine eyes have seen the wonderful works which are praised (ver. 37), and among them the resurrection of Lazarus! (Jno. xi. 18, 19.) It is *hid* through thine own fault, according to the righteous judgment of the Father, who can make His revelations only to babes. (Matt. xi. 25.) Hidden from thee is thy sin, My salvation and My peace, hidden from thee the word of prophecy in thine hands; hidden therefore is the swiftly coming judgment. For this

[1] Not only Sepp, but Wetstein also, recognises the profound allusion to the name of the primitive, holy *city of peace*:—Utinam quæ diceris Jerusalem re ipsâ esses Jerusalem, ac *videres* ea, quæ *pacem* tibi præstare possent!

latter is not to be excluded, as the continuous ὅτι of the following verse shows. The Lord takes this last expression from Isa. xxix. 9–12; a chapter to which His ensuing announcements point our attention.

Vers. 43, 44. "Because thou hast neglected thy day, the day of peace, days of conflict, tumult, and abasement will come (as ch. xxiii. 29)—they will break in with frightful horror upon thy blind security," as is expressed in the additional ἐπί σε. Now comes the plain and undisguised description of those days, as they are even now before *His* eyes; the tres gradus angustiarum in living presentation, as they lead to that final consummation—not one stone upon another! *Thine enemies*—thus does He plainly designate the Romans, whose Cæsar they vainly prefer to their own King (Jno. xix. 15): for they must be understood in these words by every reader. Yet should it not be alleged against Him that He does not at once *name* them, since it is very far from His design to summon the people to a conflict with that power to which He assigns the final victory. They will cast a χάραξ about thee, an encampment, a line of circumvallation, most firmly fortified;—not always the case in sieges, but predicted here in expressions which have a typical meaning, even as they were literally fulfilled in due time. Let Isa. xxix. be consulted (on the prophetic reference of which see Vol. iii.), where Ariel is threatened, the city where David dwelt, in which year is added to year of vain revolutions of feasts. Note there the "multitude of *thy strangers*," ver. 5); and (ver. 3) וְצַרְתִּי עָלַיִךְ מָצֹב, Sept., καὶ βαλῶ περὶ σὲ χάρακα—which in its first fulfilment, is again expressly remarked in Ezek. xxi. 22. And from this verse is taken the περικυκλώσουσι, which is carried on in the συνέξουσί σε πάντοθεν, see there כָּתוּר. But it gives also an echo of the old denunciation of Moses, וְהֵצַר לְךָ בְּכָל־שְׁעָרֶיךָ, Deut. xxviii. 52. The συνέχειν implies an entire inclosure and shutting in, thus anguish being added to anguish and without hope of salvation; and Titus, as we know, caused the entire city to be surrounded by a *wall* of thirty-nine stadia when the materials of the ramparts failed him. Καὶ ἐδαφιοῦσι σε—such is the end of all thy proud magnificence! Ἐδαφίζειν is generally to cast down to the ground, and is then used of demolished cities—to make them even with the ground, ἄνω κάτω στρέφειν. See

Isa. xxix. 4, πρὸς τὸ ἔδαφος, and Deut. xxviii. 52, עַד רֶדֶת. The same word applies, in another sense, to the inhabitants put to the sword, and in its most fearful meaning, to the little ones of Jerusalem dashed on the ground—see Ps. cxxxvii. 9; Isa. iii. 25; Ezek. xxxi. 12; Hos. x. 14, xiii. 16, Sept. A spurious reading referred the τέκνα σου ἐν σοί back to ver. 43, not being able to connect with them the ἐδαφίζειν. The Lord, who here, as everywhere, utters the language of earlier prophetic contemplation, concentrating all aspects in one human view, embraces in τέκνοις a comprehensive meaning: first, by a usual expression, the inhabitants of the city; then the other children of the land gathered together in one at the feast (at the fulfilment nearly two millions in all) in the metropolis, as the ἐν σοί indicates; and finally, the actual children of this present generation, as appears in ch. xxiii. 28, 29, and as was frightfully realised in their ἐδαφίζειν after the typical judgment denounced upon Babylon. (Ps. cxxxvii.) Last of all, not one stone remains upon another—and of this we have already spoken on Matt. xxiv. 2. *Then* indeed will the stones cry out; then will each one of them bear witness—I also am from the walls of desolated glory, am a witness that He whom this city rejected was and still is her King.[1]

The close of the prophecy returns back into the commencement of the *lamentation;* but now with the wrathful judicial word instead of the fruitless wish of love. "Ah, hadst thou known! Therefore, because thou *hast not* known! Because of that, and not because of all thy sin and transgression! If this day thou wouldst receive Me, all would be atoned and forgiven." But the Lord knows that this will not be, and therefore speaks of the future as if it were the past: He embraces the whole time preceding the judgment as the time of gracious visitation, although He especially means the days of His manifestation. There are for every land and every people, and even for every soul, definite times of visitation, of which one must be the last: —hence it concerns all to *know*, as well the grace of the visitation, as also that that grace has only its appointed *time*. Jerusalem knew neither, and was hurled to the dust—but her King

[1] When Frederic the Great asked Professor Gellert—What he thought of *Christ?* he replied—What thinks your majesty of the destruction of the city of Jerusalem?

and her Saviour *wept* over her! With what joy will He, whose love wept over the impending downfall of the old Jerusalem, glory in the new Jerusalem perfected at last! (Isa. lxv. 19.) Thus speaks Baxter; but better still will Bengel's exclamation on ver. 27 of the same chapter harmonise with our thoughts—"O meek and gracious King! But who will be able to endure the sword of His mouth, when He shall be seen upon the white horse (Rev. xix. 11)!"

We conclude with the admonition which the mercy of these *tears* of the Lord Jesus, sealing the *grace* and the *truth* of all His sayings, urges upon many who will read this book. Know thou the day of thy visitation, that so *thine enemies*, to whom thou mayest now be betraying thy King, may not, in the judicial anguish of death, encompass and hem thee in on every side, tormenting thee till thou art cast down into the abyss!

THE

GOSPEL OF ST JOHN.

PREFACE.

I NOW advance with my readers, in this volume, which is issued in a second edition, to the exposition of the most profound, sublime, and distinctive *discourses of the Lord Jesus*, as they have been preserved for us by His Spirit in this "the only true, and gracious fundamental Gospel." The Lord is my witness, and I take comfort in once more repeating it, that in entering this innermost sanctuary, at the threshold of which we paused in awe, I am conscious of a deep and becoming dread *in the presence of Him who speaks*, which throws its restraint upon all that I write concerning His words. The Lord also knows that the seemingly unmeasured severity with which I am constrained to oppose many in this age, springs from a conscientious and lowly subjection to Him, who Himself must alone vindicate His own words.

It is, indeed, a lofty design, to expound the Gospel of that Evangelist who, *initiatissimus mente et tenacissimus verborum Christi*, has the special prerogative to enshrine in Scripture all that the Logos made flesh, the only begotten of the Father, testified to the world concerning the mysteries of His person and redeeming work; as well as all that He finally poured out of the depths of His own heart into the amazed hearts of His first disciples, for the future interpretation of the Spirit of truth when He should bring His words to their remembrance. In a manner different from the synoptical Gospels, the Word itself in this passes out of the original letter into spirit, and is so raised and glorified that the Word suffers, and lives before our eyes. In a measure beyond theirs, the presentation, according to the Apostle's

mind, and the immediate outgoing of the Lord's own Spirit, are blended together: in this Gospel, indeed, they melt perfectly into one. Whosoever is of the truth must everywhere feel the breath of the Lord, who is the Spirit, and hear His voice crying —Thus have I spoken, thus I speak; and with all such this has its full force.[1] We have not merely (as de Wette says) "certain discourses of Jesus, which beam forth more than an earthly brilliance," but from beginning to end it is the heavenly light of the testimony of Jesus to Himself, pure and unsullied as the Spirit's influence through mortal mediation could give it. He who shall fix his thought upon that special miracle of inspiration, by which St John in his old age was enabled to present so luminous and objective and living an exhibition of this dramatic Gospel, will more and more unlearn and reject the indiscriminate use of the expression, "Johannæan representation." On this account one would be rather inclined to read with attentive mind only for himself, and to beseech every other in the words—*Tolle, lege!* Yet the dispensation of Christ's kingdom requires that they be expounded in human words by one man to another, so that the gifts of the Spirit in all may be mutually furthered and completed.

But where shall such exposition of such a word begin, and where shall it end; especially in a time like this, and amid theology such as that which now surrounds us? How shall we win an entrance for the Spirit's testimony into the minds of men such as we for the most part now find them, in their cloudy confusion, or in their contemptuous self-defences? All things in the Lord's word are spoken to the conscience in order to faith, piercing and convincing in order to life; but the guides of our schools, and not only they but those whom they have indoctrinated and spoiled, resent it with indignity if the expositor speaks in the spirit of the words which he expounds. What they want is a mere grammatical, historical exposition which shall avoid all

[1] Not, by any means, that in this Gospel John has superseded Christ; no longer a disciple but founding a sect of his own; going beyond the Christ of whom he writes! (Lange, Leben Jesu i. 101.) But Christ bears witness to Himself through John, and gives to His servant the pen of a marvellous writer, and the power to sink deep into His Lord's word, and work, and life, and person, and heart.

interference with themselves, and leave their own hearts alone. One must preserve, forsooth, the decent gravity of the teaching tone; and carefully eschew all "preaching," while every word that he handles is preaching most mightily and loud! Again, these words are in themselves so pregnant, profound, inexhaustible, and mystically deep, that the beams of the light of the world create in our sight, and to our blinded eyes, only the light of the moon, and we have to wait for the eagle eye of St John's final church before the full light of the Sun will shine. Many readers, however, for whom we would gladly write, do not understand this, and will only be contented with such sure results as are perfectly plain and evident to themselves, with such a translation of the marvellous words into their own ordinary speech as leaves no difficulty behind. We must give one single meaning to every single word, to be measured by the narrow standard of common reasoning, though the all-comprehending Logos is speaking with all the fulness and profundity of His meaning! The poor expositor, aiming with as much precision and plainness as possible to indicate the rich contents of one brief saying, finds himself involuntarily drawn out into a manifold amplitude of thoughts and words: but this offends our age; the day of modest folios upon the sacred text is long gone by, and the impatience of the present day must have everything swiftly adapted to pocket use! Books are so much multiplied that there is no time to read, to study any one in particular. Every author speaks into the tumult of the market-place; and loses the attention of that better class which he would address, because even these innocently think it their duty to expand the range of their knowledge, rather than explore its depths. Once more, the plain sayings which issue from the lips of Eternal Wisdom contain the answer to all the questionings of speculation, the province of which is essentially only to *question;* they contain all the treasures of that Theosophy which is conversant with the mysteries of God the Father and Christ. But even the best speculation of our day is, with few exceptions, deeply tinctured with a pantheistic, deistic, or rather spiritualist infusion; entertains a kind of horror *vacui* (scilicet *pleni*) for all that is mystic and theosophic; and is thereby rendered quite unsusceptible to the true perception of the innermost *realities* of the words of

Christ in St John! In all these cases we cannot fail to give offence at first, rather than assistance: we must not only be prepared for this in many instances, but, however desirous that it were otherwise, must make it our purpose and aim.

Feeling, as I did, that in dealing with this Gospel the method and style must necessarily be somewhat different from that which was appropriate to the more obviously intelligible first Evangelists, I long wavered, in the first edition, between two plans. I must either decline, to a greater extent than was thought proper in the former volumes,[1] all reference to ancient and modern expositors, and thus allow the Word itself to evolve its own independent meaning, and exert its own unqualified influence upon the whole being of the reader in the words of exposition; *or*, yielding to necessity, must enter more fully than formerly into current exegetical systems, and conduct my own with still more reference to the names and words of other men. It will be found that I have decided on the latter course, though it has been with much personal reluctance; deeply conscious, withal, how feeble has been my endeavour to realize the ideal of an exposition of the Gospel of St John, such as it floats before my mind; an exposition which should objectively exhibit its contents and unfold them with the highest artistic arrangement and language. I may hope that I thus conciliate that class of readers which would throw aside an exposition of St John similar to my Epistle to the Hebrews, as being mere "harmonizing;"[2] yet it is equally my desire that that other class of practical people, unversed in the learning of the schools, whom it is my special desire to keep in view, may not find too much extraneous matter.

Meanwhile, I can still conscientiously avow, after seven years, that I have to the best of my ability taken the Lord Himself as my pattern. We see Him, especially in this Gospel, condescending to contend with the most alienated opponents, but yet elevated above all the strife of controversy; maintaining the truth, and pursuing His inferences with the most imperturbable and absolute

[1] The second edition, however, even of the earlier volumes, has extended this kind of reference, in order to prepare a uniformity of character in the work as a whole.

[2] Who, to this day, decline to receive my "Epistle to the Hebrews" as a commentary.

utterance of His own ἀμὴν ἀμήν. He who cannot in some degree imitate that model, under the sanction of the Lord's name and commission, had better refrain from employing his pen upon those words which St John has delivered ἐκ μαρτυρίας εἰς μαρτυρίαν. If there are any who cannot tolerate this witnessing positiveness in the exposition of the Divine testimony, who think the controversies of man about the words of the Son of God, however perverse, less presumptuous than the boldness of that believing apprehension which sinks deep into their meaning,—I can only say that I write not for them; for, being emancipated by the grace of God from bondage to a proud and contentious school-theology, my only ambition is to be a listening disciple, and speaking witness, of my one and only Master.

I may venture to make some remarks upon the position which my own insignificant person occupies in the books of others; constrained to do so by its anomalous character. Indeed, the exposition of St John which I now send forth seems to require the accompaniment of an open and explicit avowal of my relation to that theology of the schools, and theological science of the learned, with which the longer I study it the less I can agree. I utter this as my frank *confession*, partly of what I believe, or rather what in believing I know; partly, of the distressing observations which I cannot but make of my contemporaries. As to the former, it abides firm in the sight of God, in the light and life of His Spirit: as to the latter, how gladly should I think myself deceived!

I hope to have already shown that I neither fanatically despise, or wilfully neglect, scientific and learned investigation: that I do industriously seek out, and frankly accept, whatever truth is discerned and uttered by others; and that I am very far removed from a bigoted limitation to the narrow range of my own vision, or a foolish contempt for external auxiliary apparatus. No one, not enjoying the leisure of academical life, could reasonably be expected to have done more than I have done in reading, studying, comparing, and collecting.[1] It only remains for me to protest, once for all, that my opinion never was what Dr

[1] Since then other writings have proved, and with some effect, that I may be trusted even among the scientific and learned, though my aim is to represent and sustain a much higher cause than theirs.

Dorner,[1] with a preconceived distrust, seems to suppose; and do honestly admit, that "renuente philologia in Scriptura S. nil audendum."[2] But while I do so, I must in two brief positions give my estimate of a certain "Science," which lords it so despotically just now in the domain of theology.

First: Science, as science, does not bring salvation, any more than man can be justified and regenerate through mere learning. But, to save themselves, and if they are true divines to save others, must ever be the fundamental matter, even for divines, being themselves but sinful men. This is the standard by which I value science; as far as it subserves that end, I

[1] In the treatise de oratione Christi eschatologica, p. 85, a very comprehensive tract, though it does not acknowledge the hermeneutical principle of a typical perspective in all prophecy.

[2] The protest thus formerly given may still stand on account of many others. What was declared in the first edition of Vol. ii. to be "so rigorously philological," meant only "incorrectly inferred," since the philological argument was conducted by the help of *biblical* phraseology. In opposition to him, I termed *philological* the useless reference to *profane Greek in cases where the Scripture has impressed its own peculiar stamp upon the words.* Even if Dorner, better versed in profane literature than I am, should be able to establish the contested translation of γενεά by classical authorities, yet I maintain that I have *decisively*, and in a manner more conformably to the passage, established it from the *Scriptural* דּוֹר to be a generation continuously propagating itself. (In the second edition I strive to make this quite clear.) I had asserted, Vol. iii. p. 291, that the biblical signification, and the *etymon* of the Greek verb, could not be at variance, when I said—"a meaning which, independently of this, may properly belong to γενεά." Dr Umbreit, in his otherwise favourable review of my "Psalms" (Stud. u. Krit. 1836 s. 555), blames me for "not seldom, against my own will, violating the laws of *grammatical-historical* interpretation." But if examples had been adduced, it would probably have appeared that the general acceptation of what is grammatical-historical in the *domain of the Bible*, itself needs amendment; that *there* the grammatical-historical exposition must necessarily become a spiritual-symbolical, and thus again a mystical-typical; and that thus only we arrive at the genuine spiritual-grammar of the Holy Ghost. I may be allowed to refer to the development of my hermeneutical principles in Tholuck's litt. Anzeiger, 1836, Nr. 57–60. My critics have been free enough to condemn me, but I have seen no evidence of errors, either philological or historical, in this department. Even de Wette, in his severe polemical attack upon me (Ueber die erbauliche Erklarung der Psalmen), has not undertaken to allege against me any errors in the criticism of the language.

esteem and use it: and by this standard I condemn it, when useless or hurtful.

Secondly: *Science does not create faith, but faith creates science.*[1] This thesis, which belongs to the essential preparation for a καθέδρα Χριστοῦ, must not be disputed about, though it may be opposed. If there be found one who can in earnest do the latter, to him the true church of believers and saints in all ages cries, as he approaches the threshold—'Αγεωμέτρητος μὴ εἰσίτω!

By the grace of God, and through a confirmed faith in the Holy Scripture,—a faith which, when I began to write in 1824, was as fixed in its principle as it has ever since been—I am altogether free from those shackles which too great a fear of their fellows has imposed upon most of the learned, permitting them only to proceed in the track which the contemporaneous Areopagus of science prescribes and sanctions.[2] I have a thousand times observed, during my continuous study, and have deeply deplored, how often the most learned and acute of them fall into the commission of the greatest "follies in Israel," simply from their deferring to their own or others' fallible authority, instead of bowing down their hearts and consciences before the sole Word of God; and this has perpetually strengthened my determination to renounce all learning and teaching but that which proceeds ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν. I had rather keep silence altogether, excepting in my pulpit and ministry, than fall in with the practice of the learned, which still, though perhaps more latently, predominates—that of *subjecting* faith in the Word to the conclusions of science.

I cannot prevail upon myself to exhibit ostentatiously, and at the expense of usefulness, any such "learned material" as I may have, and by which, doubtless, the "operation behind the scene is better brought to perfection." I would rather use it with all industry, in paying attention to books which, within the schools,

[1] This means much more than Bacon's aphorism of religion being the aroma which preserves science. The assertion of Thiersch agrees with it —that times when the fervour of religious testimony fails are generally marked by a decline of *theological* erudition. But our position goes even further than this.

[2] So that many divines take different forms in their revised works, just as science is changing around them.

may be scarcely or not at all noticed. For it is, indeed, the great error of many theologians, and an error which heavily avenges itself, to read and regard everything theological merely ex professo, shutting themselves up from the testimony which comes from any other faculty than their own, however harmonious and co-operant it may be.

With regard to the unbelievers of this age, I regard it as my vocation, without dictating to others their duties, to set forth a *positive exhibition* of the spiritual and *believing apprehension* of Holy Writ. There lies, in my opinion, much more apologetic and vindicating power in this spiritual interpretation, than in the diffident criticism which is ever seeking to find a groundless "standing point;" and which, with its godless, heathenish exegesis, stands nowhere but is always falling deeper, just denying the faith which it professes to maintain. As it regards the orthodox of this age, I feel myself called to be the exponent of the *essential unity and integrity* of believing exposition, in which the γραφή and γέγραπται remains ever firm.[1] It is with great pain of mind that, after seeking long, I find scarce any of this;[2] hence it is my sad lot to find myself in opposition to both sides, the orthodox as well as the other. But what remains for me to do? I confess it to be the one necessity of my life, and he would be my true comforter who should, by the judgment and testimony of truth, release me from it. But I cannot, out of regard to my contemporaries, take any other ground than that which I occupy in God's sight: and that I cannot I humbly say—thank God!

I say what I have to say without any desire to conciliate respect, or win praise for my own poor self: on the contrary, desiring from my very heart such controversy as would be profitable both to my cause and myself, I never sang for academical

[1] To awaken attention to what the title of Bengel's Gnomon (containing in itself more than many an entire commentary) expresses: the simplicitas, profunditas, concinnitas, salubritas sensuum cœlestium. Note well the *profunditas* joined to the simplicitas, and similarly, instead of the *practical* the salubritas. Finally, the condition is presupposed, to derive all this *ex nativâ verborum vi.*

[2] On that side, where it should first of all be sought for, we find it not, but ecclesiastical authority introduced in spite of a boasted bowing to the authority of God's Word; and thus in the strongest manner are the principles of the evangelical church denied.

laurels: the melody would have been but poor for that.[1] Customary compliments are easily dispensed with, when one aims at nothing of the kind for himself; it seems as unsuitable for the books, as for the pulpits, of "the ministers of the Word of God. The author of a certain book closes a preface which begins and continues with the emphatic I, by assuring us, "that he would not place himself in opposition to any man whom he could not respectfully shake by the hand, though an enemy," but such gentle controversy in the domain of God's saving truth has no charm for me. Preserving my sole reverence for the Highest, my courtesy is such as is taught in His supreme court; and with regard to other men, it consists in this—to state my acceptance of their views with all simplicity of speech, or to oppose and rebuke them by name, as cause is given for the one or the other.

As it regards that latest *criticism* of the Gospels—which in the preface of the first volume I termed *criticism run mad*, and know no better name—such as myself need not meddle with it, more especially as it finds answer enough in other quarters. It

[1] This expression was enforced from me by one of my critics, who, with evidently good intention, uttered his *captatio benevolentiæ* by wishing me "such a mark of acknowledgment." Considering the tendency of my uniform hostility to the mere learning of the schools, evidenced uniformly from the time of the preface to the first issue of my "Andeutungen," this was, to say the least, inappropriate, and essentially uncourteous. I have every respect for that truly honourable dignity (the highest in evangelical Christendom), which formerly through its pressure upon the conscience provoked the hostility of the Reformers against the triple crown. But the possessors of this dignity will admit that it does not weigh so heavily now, but is supported with the old Erasmian propriety. But seeing that it is distributed generally in deference to position and place, and attached promiscuously to every high office in the church as a mere badge of honour; seeing that it is too often prostituted, as many deplore with myself, upon objects most unworthy (an example of which, instar omnium, the "affentheologie" of a truly profane Philologist, who could not, indeed, read the word κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν, reminds us of); it may cease to be an unpardonable thing that those who are running the race, which all should run, with their eyes fixed upon a higher βραβεῖον, should attach no importance, either for themselves or others, to a mark of honour so doubtful, except in its own appropriate sphere.—I thus wrote formerly; and although shortly afterwards constrained to receive myself this badge of honour, it may stand as the permanent expression of my mind.

flatters itself, in its arrogance,[1] that it has undermined to its very fall the Gospel of St John, a book which has, beyond almost every other in the world, or even in Scripture, the double seal of *external* and *internal* authentication: and because I have passed it by unregarded, the little contribution which I have offered meets the reprisal of contempt. For my own part, I have something better to do than to engage in the task assigned to others, and which they are discharging—the task, namely, of dealing with those whose *infatuation* would reduce the Lord of glory, on whose breast St John lay, to a legendary myth born of the mists of a later time; His words the mere historical and symbolical substratum of Gnostic systems. Oh that those, however, who do meet these adversaries, would meet them *always* in the authority of that truth which is like the sun in heaven, and in the full assurance of that faith which dictated the postscript—Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ μαθητὴς ὁ μαρτυρῶν περὶ τούτων, καὶ γράψας ταῦτα· καὶ οἴδαμεν, ὅτι ἀληθής ἐστιν ἡ μαρτυρία αὐτοῦ. Would that these bold champions would anxiously take care lest they themselves be guilty of construing the Word too "scientifically," and lest they yield to the temptation of meeting their adversaries on common ground![2]

Those who believe and see show too much sympathy with the herd of the blind. Not thoroughly rejoicing themselves in the self-evidencing light, and not industriously availing themselves of their own privilege, they seek to bring them to see by mere "scientific disquisition," whereas the only method of helping them is to utter from the heart and experience the rudiments of instruction which are laid down in Heb. vi. 1. This is a heavy drag to the prosperous progress of an orthodox theology, and a penetrating insight into the meaning of Scripture. For as there is no knowledge which is indifferent as it regards faith and unbelief,

[1] Which Hilgenfeld has since raised to its highest pitch.

[2] As Thiersch still does,—the first edition said. Luthardt himself lays himself somewhat open to my complaint, and I may use to him his own words: "If a man stumbles at the great reality itself, there is an end of discussion: for these great universal views are diametrically opposed." Even this saying would sound better, if relieved of its learned tone:—If a man stumbles at the person of Christ, then do Faith and Unbelief come in direct conflict.

so there is no merely scientific method of leading the obstinately unbelieving to faith. It were a happy hour for them if, instead of books of scientific polemics for their benefit, the Preacher of repentance would apply his remedy. But there are evil ones whose case should be met otherwise even than by the preaching of repentance. A time will come when, if our books survive, it will appear utterly incomprehensible that *Christian* learned men of this age could deal so mildly, tamely, and respectfully with the *children of Satan*, provided they were only clothed in the garments of learning, instead of rending their slight rags and casting them into the grinning faces of such as mock their Lord.[1]

It is no part of *my* vocation to contend about the authenticity and authority of that Word, which has ever, in all ages since it was written, most mightily sustained its own claims in the congregation of believers, through the Holy Ghost. Its "inspiration" is to me a truth and a reality, in which I live, and from which I speak, according to 2 Cor. iv. 13. Though not conscious of being naturally unsystematic, and in the fundamental matters of faith especially being devoted to unity and simplicity; yet I do think that the necessities of this age are better subserved by an exegesis which exhibits the living spirit in the Word, than by newly devised systems and formularies. Were I to enter upon the latter, the word "Inspiration" itself, which must be used for preliminary explanation, would not hold its ground. Then must the marvellous mystery of the γραφὴ θεόπνευστος be explored, which, with its infinite variety of degree, and perfectly harmonious organism, must be sought in the central midst of Scripture itself and its own self-evidencing testimony; in a manner very different from that to which the Schools have been wont.[2] The time does not seem come for me or for others to

[1] Such facile antagonists force one to think of the variously told legend of the hermit who would convert the devil. To say the least, the fundamental principle of that extreme anxiety for adjusting and negotiating with such men, is a deep denial of that great and awful *contrast* which the last judgment will bring out for ever. Anton Günther utters it:—"Christianity is only one great Fact, which cries from heaven: just as all history is only one great Fact, which however cries to heaven." Vorschule zur spek. Theol. I. 84.

[2] And to that of *Gaussen* also, whose forced and violent defence of Theopneustia provokes opposition, without any true insight into the thing

construct such a new and sufficing system of inspiration, which would be like a new confession rising out of that spiritual interpretation of the holy Word which has been ripened and confirmed by long experience. The faith which is to be presupposed, and which rightly appeals to the substance of the old creeds, may suffice to establish the Scripture as such in the belief: to perceive the full meaning of that Word, and embrace the idea of Scripture in all its comprehensiveness, is not the beginning or a condition to be pre-established, it is the last result and precious fruit of its living appropriation to our own souls. The other method presents us, like most systematic theology in general, the curious conclusions of human impatience: we must be content with negation and defence for a while; we take simply these two negative positions, that the true theory of inspiration neither abstracts and separates "the inspiration of Scripture from the inspiration of the life" in the Talmudical manner (as Lange says); nor does it create a mere inspiration of persons and official-life out of a specific inspiration of *Scripture*.—I have not neglected, in fine, to give here and there explanations which indicate the true way and strive to pursue it; for example, in the Excursus, Vol. iii. p. 192, comp. p. 160.[1]

The review already mentioned[2] says that "the subjective Christian life and thinking of the author, and of the extant church of the awakened, is the primary factor" of my exposition. Now I enter my protest, first against the merely *extant* church as coupled with the strange and almost pietist addition of the "*awakened*,"

itself. It is not necessary for the actual *readers* of my writings that I should repeat a request which has been made elsewhere (Deutsch. Zeitschr. 1851), that I may not be confounded with him, or such views confounded with mine. But there are some mere preface-readers, for whom I may mention it here.

[1] To a correspondent, who requested it, I gave a more full reference to passages in my works, bearing upon this point:—Andeutungen, 2 Samuel. s. 452–485. Keryktik § 30. Psalmen, Einleitung. Reden Jesu vi. bei Luc. xxiv. 27. Der Weise ein König p. 8. Jesaias s. iv.–xviii.

[2] In Tholuck's litt. Anzeiger 1844. Nr. 68–70, to the expressions of which this preface particularly refers, because it contains the most express characteristics of that school theology which protests against me, as I protest against it. No personal opposition to the critic as such will be discovered; but a general defence called forth by a particular occasion.

and then especially against the *primary* factor. *This last* is no other than the exegetical development of the meaning from the Word itself, into which it is my object to sink deep with my readers. If any man does not find this "*genetic*" development of the spirit in the book as a whole (allowing for the admitted errors which the personal prejudgment of every uninspired man may occasion), I cannot forbear from expressing my fear that the fault is in his own eye, or the spectacles with which he reads.[1] As far as regards his "*subjective*," let me ask whether any one has ever discovered the art of altogether going out of himself; and whether this high-sounding declamation about unprejudicedness, freedom from bias, objectivity and so forth, is not often merely the lamentation over its own emptiness, of a subject which is entirely shut up to the object, and has nothing in itself at all. And does not the best-aimed method of teaching, which would most go out of itself, and is most universally susceptible to everything external, necessarily *impart* only that which the subject possesses in its own knowledge and experience? Just as, and *in as far as*, we have the word *dwelling in us* (Jno. v. 38), are we able to understand it ourselves, and expound it to others. The expositor who cannot comprehend this limitation might as well lose all idea that he remains a distinct and individual personality. Now it is to indicate this that the name is set down upon the title with "expounded by" before it, and not "revealed through" as in the case of Swedenborg. But as it respects *the Church*, I would ask my beloved Critic, both as a fellow-believer in Christ, and as the representative of a not unorthodox theology, whether he would seriously desire that his theology or exegesis should be fundamentally independent of the Church of the believers of all times? This more or less manifest separation of the Schools from the Church, we (for I may here confidently say *we*) hold as a most deplorable mischief of the pseudo-scientific tendency; inasmuch as many a precious gift of the Spirit in the body of Christ is lost to it through the limits of what is to be received as true interpretation being so cramped and restricted. They cannot, or they will not,

[1] While there are many, not measuring according to the common standard, who think they find in my work a strict and rigorous development of the spirit of the Scripture.

acknowledge *the living tradition of the understanding and interpretation of God's Word in the church of the spiritually taught*, the stream of which flows down from the beginning to our own times, but the existence of which seems to have been unknown to Ernesti in his chapter *de interpretibus eorumque usu*, and has not been taken much account of since. There are those whose knowledge of anything is knowledge only when they have it in a book, or rather when they find it in the book of some learned man. But this is simply narrow-mindedness, for the domain of true science is everywhere, and there especially where the object it would understand is livingly exhibited. And has not the Word of God from the beginning lived *more* in the church than in the schools? Is there not a vast fund of spiritual knowledge and perception among the orthodox intelligent laity of the present day, beyond the region of book-learning, which would be found to be wonderfully harmonious in its results, falling back upon the deep fundamental principles of life and of spirit? It is because this is not acknowledged that we find expositions and principles of exposition, which are universally accepted and admitted among the orthodox laity, quoted with *nonnullus lubet* by even the best and most learned, or as the very noticeable and remarkable view of a certain N. N. Then it happens, as with the Reviewer alluded to, who *marvels* greatly (without weighing my deduction from scriptural usage, and the context of the place) that I should have returned to the exploded view which makes γενεά, Matt. xxiv. 34, the race or people of the Jews: while just at the same time Dr Dorner re-establishes this very view upon fundamental philological principles, and asserts it as "proved."[1] Is it a great injustice, then, on our part, if, without paying too much respect to the "exploded" on the right, and the "proved" on the left, we seek for light in the Word itself first, and then go to the exegetical tradition of believers generally? Be it that this or the other point is given up in the Schools (such, for example, as the personal

[1] We find him also, on his part, saying to others of the learned—*miror*, non ausos esse, *traditioni recentiorum* falsæ aperta fronte contradicere. He even explains how it is that this "error nostra ætate apud Theologos, non philologos frequentissimus" is passed on from one to another in an accumulating tradition.

reference of the seed of the woman or the Shiloh to Christ, Solomon's authorship of the Ecclesiastes, the ancient composition of the book of Job, the application of Ps. xxii. and other similar subjects in the Old Testament), this would have but little weight. The spiritual perception which the Holy Ghost imparts, and which renders the Church's orthodoxy very much independent of the professors' chairs, grows continually from age to age, and is a perpetual offence to the schools. All true faith will also become knowledge; although as faith it depends not on knowledge, and yields not to it. Did not the first, and most ancient theology of Christianity, stand to the original apostolical faith of the church[1] such as it existed in the ecclesiastical *praedicatio*, in *similar* relations as afterwards Scholasticism to the Catholic faith of the church? And is not this, when rightly understood, the true relation of the living object to the thought and investigation spent upon it?[2]

What says the Word? is the question of the expositor. But that of course means—What says it *to me?* And then follows as a necessary corrective of a narrow subjectivity—What does it say to me, in common with the whole church, of which I am but a member? What has it said to that church through all ages? Though this may point to the path of history, yet the goal of that path is no other than this—What does the Word say thus specially to the church, as it now is, *to the believers of my age*, to whom I would expound it, not as a teacher standing above and independent of them, but as a ministering member of their company?[3] Then should we have the consciousness of

[1] Which regarded new systems of dogma and doctrine, when they were not repelled as heretical, only as τὴν τῆς ἐκκλησίας μυστικὴν ἑρμηνεῦσαι παράδοσιν.

[2] As when, for example, the Missionary Church understands a mission-text, or pastors apply consoling promises, etc.—which *might* possibly be demonstrated to be incorrect, but their application has the first prejudice in its favour, *against* the Schools which are removed from common life and experience.

[3] To *expound* the Word to *unbelievers*, that is, to attempt to bring them to a full understanding and acknowledgment of it before the true criticism which sits in judgment upon itself has paved the way, is no better than a labour of Sisyphus, to which the half-believing condemn themselves in their own folly.

the present church, so far as it may be rightly discerned by the subjective expositor according to fundamental historical principles, as the *secondary* factor of exposition added to the primary matter of the Word itself. I have a better right to call this "genetic-historical," than others what they so term. *How does the Word speak through me from the church to the church?* That is my exegetical principle, and relying upon that I hope still, as I am thankful I have heretofore, to administer some help to the ministers and preachers of the Word, who often find so little exposition which they can turn to profit in the most learned and critical commentaries, so much which speaks its own condemnation in its *inapplicability to the pulpit.*

From this principle follows of necessity the "*form* selected" with its "peculiar and specific hybrid character." The ancients, as we well know, gave their exegesis, for the most part, the same form, combining contemplation with profit: if it now appears to be a mongrel style, this must be the result of the unhappy separation between the chair and the pulpit. It is with design and on principle[1] that I have abandoned the unhortatory and barren method of the School, which so carefully guards against every warm and heartfelt word. In the treatment of the living Word of God this can never be other than a most unnatural and unseemly method, even in the works which are most preeminently learned. Is it not bad enough, brethren, that speculatists and dealers in antiquity should lead their readers such roundabout ways on barren heaths:—shall we divines also imitate their example?[2]

A truly theological interpreter should, in my conviction, be as rigorous as possible in *bearing his witness* to what God's grace has taught him. With that, he should also be as large-hearted and sympathizing to all sincere seekers as the love which his faith teaches him requires; he should have an answer ready for everything that is *νουνεχῶς* written or spoken. But, as his

[1] Which explanation, though already given, the critic who condemns me takes care to withhold from the public.

[2] It is rather our aim "to expound the Scripture in such a manner that every hearer or reader may feel convinced, that *this applies to himself also* —mutato nomine historia (not here fabula) de te narratur!" Baader, Fermenta cognitionis 2 Heft s. 15.

principle is ἀληθεύων ἐν ἀγάπῃ, he should oppose the error of by far the most, not merely by setting mind against mind, but by detecting the sources of that error; he should affectionately denounce or sharply rebuke, since his God hath instructed him,[1] those sins of the heart which too often lie at the root of the errors of the head. This was the method of the Lord Himself and His Apostles—and was their method unscientific? That style of theological writing which declines to do this, through consciousness of lacking the διάκρισις πνευμάτων or the ἐξουσία requisite for it, may fall, amid the rude contrasts of this age, into the danger of threshing with much emphatic noise mere empty straw, and of drawing water in the sieve of the Danaides.

With very sincere respect for Dr Ullmann,[2] I cannot but think that his expressions in the matter of Fisher's scandal (Stud. u. Krit. 1845, 3, 666) are very significant—"In this case it is not so much a question of freedom of thought, as of *scientific and academical decorum*, of *dignity*, and *moral feeling* in the domain of science, that is concerned." He shows afterwards that his meaning was not objectionable, and that he did not suppose that Fisher might have said *what* he did, with any dignity of moral sentiment: but I may take occasion, for my own part, to ask whether our academical decorum is justified in presupposing or expecting any moral feeling in a case in which it *could not possibly* exist. It might indeed be strictly decorous to try to cleave the thick heads of those who cling to their stupidity with rough wedges. I think, indeed, that it is quite dignified and fitting, even in the department of scientific teaching, when the Lord's teachers have not mere heads alone before them, always to speak out of a full and earnest conviction and feeling to the convictions and feelings of others. This has been thought in me the presumption of a "parœnetic *schoolmaster*-tone" (it might, at least, have been "preacher-tone"); but I am profoundly convinced that this, in the heart's emotion from which it springs, is far less presumptuous than the school-*master-tone* of the learned republic, which I have avoided, and others have found wanting in me. If any over-sensitive reader should be

[1] See Isa. xxviii. 26; but in the original, or the corrected translation.

[2] Who gave us, for example, that inestimable saying—"the academical teacher has not merely heads before him, but perfect men."

offended, because I occasionally address him in personal application as a reader of my exposition, or rather as a hearer of the word expounded; and cannot bear the honourable and respectful "second person," which is, indeed, the classical formula dicendi in academical use; I can say no more than that I deplore from my heart all such prudery, and must on that account all the more earnestly assault it by direct application.

There are plenty of books, in which matters are handled in a very dignified, scientific, and fundamental way, as it is termed, and with many names and quotations and exact "investigation" introduced and discussed; but the reader who is truly investigating the deep meaning, and does not admit the presuppositions of their science, is no wiser than before, unless he can meekly repose upon the assurance—Dr N. N. has *thus and thus* decided! In opposition to this so common superficial manifoldness and distraction, I take as my motto, and beg my readers to take, what Hamann[1] says—"one eye closed, if we would see piercingly, with *simplicity*, that is using an eye which is directed to Him who is ever the great reward of that simplicity." It is not in my power to give universally self-evident results, for the collective sharp-sighted ones on the right and on the left. It is in the power of no man,—but I have not from the beginning thought of or attempted it. If I speak with confident boldness from my own conviction, let him contradict still more boldly, whom I do not convince. As to the "purely critical investigations," which are open to every man, a Bauer as well as a Bengel, a Baur[2] equally with a Hengstenberg—but there are many intermediate gradations—I only admit and respect them in the purely indifferent *Externis*. But these are elsewhere amply provided for; the hewers of wood and drawers of water in the sanctuary are much more numerous than the priests, even such as, out of mere pleasure in such service, busy themselves with wood that cannot be burned, and water that cannot be used, from which therefore the sanctuary can derive no advantage. When the Externa are brought into their true relations

[1] His writings by Roth, Th. 1, S. 344.

[2] Whose distinction from the former exhibits, according to Seidel's Zeitgedichten, only the right and left of the polished and the rough—"Linke nennt sich schlechtweg *Bauer*, Rechte vornehm *Baur* ohn'E'

with the Internis, as in sound theology they must be, then does "criticism" determine either for faith or unbelief. And I regard it as a work of highest necessity, or at least of most beneficial *complementary* value in this age, rather to labour for this separation than to conceal and soften away its necessity.

After these explanations, as sincere as they are explicit, I may ask my dear reader belonging to that most numerous class of the learned which I have described, either to reject me altogether, if they can answer that to their consciences,[1] or, instead of condemning me for exclusiveness and lack of fundamental sympathy with the position of others, to enter graciously themselves into the everywhere manifest principle of my book. I may, with all modesty, beg to deprecate for myself the measuring with their measure, the same against which I protest. But I must heartily greet all other readers whom the Lord may bring to me from among the well-instructed of the church, and pray them to receive the gift which I present according to my best ability, and to extract from it all that which the Spirit of the Lord shall authenticate as truth for their instruction and life. To Him, the King of Truth, whose great words I have dared to expound, and whose lightest sentence outweighs all the books of men, be it commended—to bless that which is true, but to forgive and render harmless its human defects.

It will be found that I have diligently investigated what has appeared in the interval of the two editions, and have otherwise added much. I have only done this, however, so far as it coincided with my plan, which did not include treatises on the genuineness, plan, peculiarities, or systems of this Gospel, by such men as Köstlin, Frommann, Reuss, and Schweizer. However ready to do so, I have found but little to retract or correct, very much rather to maintain and defend.

Only the first part of Luthardt's most excellent work had appeared before the manuscript passed from my hands, a loss which the Postscript will in some measure repair.

[1] For example, my book on the Words of the Lord Jesus has no existence for Meyer and Brückner; there is no such expositor as Stier.

THE GOSPEL OF ST JOHN.

CONVERSATION WITH NICODEMUS. THE NEW BIRTH: THE GIFT OF THE ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON: BELIEVING AND COMING TO THE LIGHT.

(Ch. iii. 3–21.)

He who was in the beginning, and from the beginning was to come; concerning whom the preacher in the wilderness, baptizing only with water, yet announcing the Spirit, testified that He was preferred before himself, because He was before himself—has now at length *come*. The true Light, which should lighten every man, and which in Israel His own inheritance had been already coming into the world, has now appeared in *human personality;* dwelling in a tabernacle like our own, as the life which had been from the beginning. The *Word* was made *flesh:* the Lord whom they sought, and the Messenger of the Covenant whom they delighted in, had *come* to His temple and to His own. He whom they knew not had appeared among them; He whom they had not apprehended, either in prophecy or fulfilment; whom they had not discerned either in Micah and Isaiah, or in Bethlehem and Nazareth; their *Messiah*, whom they would rather have hailed as the likeness of a Gideon or a Samson. But the strong man came in the form of human weakness, to wage a very different war than that against Midianites and Philistines. John stood and cried, concerning the lowly Nazarene: Behold, this is He! Behold the *Lamb of God!*

To those who listened to him, the Lord Himself gave His own invitation, *Come and see!* and they came and saw; *John*, who

now bears witness to the glory of the Only-begotten, being the first of all, and with him Andrew, coming before his brother. That other, the son of Jona, then comes; is instantly penetrated by the Lord's eye, and receives that new name which both gave him warning, and expressed his dignity. Jesus Himself then calleth Philip, who again removes the offence of Nathanael in Nazareth by repeating, *Come and see!* From that time they began to come to Him; and all who either came as Israelites indeed, or became such under the piercing and pervading light of His countenance, saw thenceforth the glory which surrounded the Son of God, the King of Israel, saw the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

Heaven had been once open at the Jordan: the Spirit had descended like a dove upon the spotless Lamb, and without ascending again. The angels had once ministered to the Son of man, who in obedience conquered Satan, for our sakes declining to contend with him as the Son of God. Now began a series of heaven-openings and angel-ministries; not as literal and express as those two calm beginning-wonders; but signs and wonders still, which manifested forth His glory, and declared to every guileless observer—This is the house of God and the very gate of heaven! The *kingdom of God* is at hand, is come!

It was not in festal solemnity at Jerusalem, but in the quiet Galilæan wedding company that the *first* sign was given. He who was supposed to be Joseph's son, but who was to be no longer the son of Mary in the full sense in which He had been such, manifested forth His glory when His hour was come, and with such attractive grace that His new disciples clung to Him with growing confidence. It was the glory of one who was not come to curse but to bless; whose purpose was to baptize with the spirit of power, and thus refresh His disciples with the new wine of everlasting *grace*. And what could He desire more than that it should already flow, although the right hour was as yet far from being come when the fruit of the vine should be drunk new in the kingdom of God.

The glory which was full of grace was now, as ever, full of *truth* and *righteousness:* the kindness and love of God our Saviour, while it brings salvation, fails not to correct and rebuke

all ungodliness. The wicked works of the Rulers in Israel are not to be tolerated, even as was the saying of the master of the feast in Cana. He who was to baptize with fire had also His fan to purge His floor: and if the salutary fire of the Holy Spirit was repelled as an offence, it must turn to an unquenchable consuming flame. At the passover in the temple at Jerusalem, when His hour was once more come, He showed by His first *act of authority*, accompanied by a *marvellous word*, that He had come for the purification of the sons of Levi. He then publicly manifested forth the majesty of His holiness, just as in the quiet circle at Cana He had manifested forth the holiness or condescending love of His majesty. Alas! they brought not to their Lord their offerings in righteousness; for they had transformed the Father's house into a house of merchandise, and the house of prayer for all nations into a den of thieves. Therefore, as a true zealot, He used the scourge of small cords, drove them out and overthrew the tables—Take *these things hence!* calling God now, in the hearing of the Jews, as He had done eighteen years before in the presence of His parents, His Father! But the Jews at Jerusalem were not like the disciples at the Jordan; they lost the word which He spoke in their resentment of the act which He performed, and desired to have a sign shown to them! And He, who well knew the words which His disciples remembered, themselves already forecasting their meaning while they compared Him whom they had found with the Scriptures concerning Him; He, who not only knew them but comprehended their depth and uttermost meaning, that the pure zeal of God's house must consume Himself among His brethren to whom He was a stranger, and His mother's children to whom He was an alien, in order that the new and living temple might rise to life out of His own death; He gave them that sign of signs, which has been, is, and will still be the seal of all former revelations, till the new temple has risen in all the proportions in which St John beheld it. But they could not understand, because they would not, that mysterious word which pointed from the shadow to the substance; in their stiff-necked resentment they would neither humbly receive it then, nor reflect upon it afterwards; they gave a petulant and perverse answer to the mild rebuke of the patient Lord; and, not daring to lay hands

on Him, they left Him with the contemptuous words of their own wilful offence.

But Jesus tarried longer at the feast, and performed, as the men of this generation desired, more than one miracle; so that many who beheld believed on His name. But their faith was, for the most part, not a recipient faith, which discerned in the miracles the glory of His grace and truth, not such as would give them power to become the sons of God; but a Jewish, Galilæan faith, living on signs. Therefore did Jesus put no faith in their faith: therefore He did not entrust Himself, and the mysteries of His person, temple, and kingdom, to all those who were disposed to entrust themselves for a season to His guidance as a teacher sent from God. For He knew them all, and the guile which was in them, just as He had known Nathanael in whom there was none: He needed not that any should testify concerning individual man, because He knew what was in man generally. He who was appealed to after His ascension as knowing all hearts, already in His humiliation knew, in the pure and perfect wisdom of the Son of man, the evil imaginations which lodged in the treacherous and deceitful hearts of the sons of men. He desired more than that faith in *His name* which might assume it as a merely useless badge; the trust He sought for was such as would bring soundness to the diseased, salvation and blessedness to the sinner. For He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.

But he likewise discerned and watched for the most concealed spark of the glimmering flax in the heart of man: not only not to quench it, but by the modulated breath of His Spirit, blowing according to the wisdom of His love, to fan it into the glowing flame which consumes all evil. As, on the one hand, therefore, He did not commit Himself unto many who might appear to others possessed of all the essentials of faith, knowing the evil thoughts of their hearts; so, on the other hand, He committed Himself, and the mysteries of His kingdom, to many in whom faith and unbelief were so strangely blended as to baffle the judgment of any merely human skill, because He discerned amid the ashes in their hearts that faint glimmer which needed only the penetrating breath of the Spirit to enkindle it. Knowing thus, not only what was in man, but what had been and should

be again in human nature, with the process of God's method to secure it; all men who came were alike to this Master of masters, to this Teacher who had come down from Heaven, and was more than any mortal teacher. All were on the same level to Him: Jews and Galilæans; Pharisees of the high Council, who understood the testimony of their Scripture sufficiently to come to Him, if they would; and Samaritan women, praying on their fathers' mountain, drinking of their fathers' well, without knowing the God to whom they prayed, and without knowing the gift which God and not their father Jacob had given, how far that gift extended, and to what higher satisfaction it directed the spiritual thirst of man. For the Son of man gave every man his due; and knew how to reveal Himself to every spirit according to its capacity and need.

Such is the central thread of the profound and suggestive connection, which St John takes up and *carries on* when he says, ch. iii. 1,—"But there was *a man* of the Pharisees, Nicodemus by name, a ruler of the Jews: *the same came to Jesus* by night." The well-disposed reader will not only have tolerated and appreciated the preceding introduction as a fit commencement of another volume; but will also allow us to extend it still further by such remarks upon the person and words of Nicodemus as are absolutely necessary for the exposition of the very first words which the Lord addressed to him. We must be permitted to treat this *conversation with Nicodemus*, at the outset, with *more fulness of detail* than what will follow, as being a kind of programme to the discourses of Jesus in His εὐαγγέλιον πνευματικόν, this esoteric mount-sermon, night-sermon rather, of the fourth Evangelist.

He who was now come knew what was in man: knowing what was in the men to whom He came, He knew what was in them who came to Him. And now came one such *man* to Him;[1]

[1] For such is the significant connection of this ἄνθρωπος with ver. 25 in the preceding chapter: it does not stand, as Klee observes, after the old, rash fashion, in the place of ἀνήρ τίς, איש. It is obvious, moreover, that an individual is brought forward out of the collective idea of mankind, and that this idea of the individual is not to be lost sight of: Yet the emphasis is on

concerning whom we should not find it easy to form an opinion, just because we cannot generally detect the fundamental character common to all men, under the special characteristics that he may assume. Now this was obviously a man of a particular characteristic: he was of the *Pharisees;* of that same proud sect, sanctimonious in good works and high science, from which, being the chief section of the Council, came those who were sent with a question to the Baptist, ch. i. 24. He was of the Pharisees, from whom the Lord, soon after His first appearance, withdrew (ch. iv. 1); whom, with the Sadducees, the Baptist, when he only saw them coming, had called a generation of vipers, classing the hypocrites with the freethinkers; the corrupt trees, which became such and bore the fruit of eternal death, because they would not discern the good fruit of the good tree; whom the mild and gentle Lord more than once denounced by the same name which His severe forerunner had applied to them. Of the Pharisees—against whose leaven the disciples of Christ were at the very first warned, and over whom He at the last pronounced those seven woes, followed by an eighth, which corresponded to the seven benedictions, followed by an eighth, which were pronounced upon the poor in spirit, and made them the salt and the light of the world. Such was the party to which this man belonged. Yet this does not give us absolute information concerning him, for it is only fair to ask the question—Were all the Pharisees rich? Does any particular order, however definitely marked out by its characteristics, preserve its identity in all its individuals? We know, indeed, what not merely the pride of the Jews, but the voice of Jesus Himself, pronounced concerning the publicans and sinners, classing them with the heathen, Matt. xviii. 17; and yet we find a Publican going down from the temple justified (Lu. xviii. 14); a chief of the publicans coming down with joy to receive Him who came to seek that which was lost, and incapable of positive deceit (Lu. xix. 6, 8, 10); yea Matthew himself, who left the seat of custom and became an Apostle! So also was there among the Pharisees a

the idea of *man*, though Luthardt groundlessly opposes me in this. I cannot think that the transition from people in general to the acquisition of this one in particular, is the main element of progress here, simply because Nicodemus himself is the representative of many.

Saul, who, though a persecutor, scorner, and injurious, did all *ignorantly* in unbelief, with a kind of conscience before God in his sin, directly opposed to the impious wickedness of others of his class (Acts xxiii. 1)—hence we find that to *him* the manifestation of the Rejected One was enough to secure him speedy and great mercy. Between the honest Pharisee Saul, and rich "whited walls" as Annas or Caiaphas, how many degrees of difference intervened! At what point in them stands the man here named Nicodemus?[1] We know not as yet before we read further: the name *Nicodemus* of itself tells us nothing; and the *Pharisee* only indicates it as in the highest degree probable that he did not come to Jesus (according to Dräseke) with an "unprejudiced spirit," but that he was in some degree influenced by the common prejudices and errors of his class; that he was not free from the general error of regarding the external rather than the internal; further, that he was involved in the obscurity of theological theory; and shared in the general contempt of the common people. For all this seems to be intimated by St John; although we might be led to presume, from the connection of his hints, that in this case there came *from among* the Pharisees, *a man*, simply considered as such, into the presence of Jesus.

The superadded title of honour, ἄρχων τῶν Ἰουδαίων, does not give us any more specific information. It does not here stand generally as in Lu. xii. 58; nor is it scil. συναγωγῆς as in Matt. ix. 18, comp. Lu. viii. 41; but it designates a member of the Sanhedrin as in Lu. xxiv. 20; Acts iii. 17, iv. 8 (Jno. vii. 26, 48), for in ch. vii. 50, he is speaking in the midst of them. But when we reflect upon the exasperation of the rulers in consequence of our Lord's rigorous condemnation of their regulations

[1] A Nicodemus, son of Gorion, distinctively named Bonai, appears in the Talmud, an assessor of the high Council, one of the three richest men in Jerusalem (comp. Jno. xix. 39), and who was still living at the destruction of the city, being also a disciple of Jesus. Sanhedr. Fol. xliii. 1. Aboth Rab. Nathan cap. 6. Tract. Gittin Fol. lvi. 1, etc. (See at large in Sepp ii. 200). It is remarkable that Nonnus calls Nicodemus πολυλήϊος ἀνήρ. With all this, however, the *age* does not agree. It has been needlessly sought to make the name a translation of נִכְעָם, or a Græcism for נַקְדָּם, and the like. Grotius referred to the Greek names which for a long time had been usual among the Jews.

in the temple, we cannot but feel our wonder increased, and understand the emphasis of the expression :—*This man*, Pharisee and Ruler as he was! came to Jesus (or according to another reading, *πρὸς αὐτόν*).—Finally, we have some light upon his person and character, and first of all, favourable. Thus he could not have been of the worst, or even the worse kind of Pharisees, for he comes to the bold, mysterious young Rabbi who had cleansed the house of His Father, and had declared His purpose to erect upon the temple destroyed by the Rulers of Israel a new and better temple; and saying and doing other marvellous things. It would not have been unreasonable if he had wished to call this doubtful Rabbi of lofty pretension before himself: but it was to his praise that he voluntarily came to Him, and not for the value of any official inquiry, not for the sake of criminating Him by His own words (the entire narrative disclaims this), but *seeking* on his own account, as an individual, for that instruction which he is desirous to hear. The circumstance that he came *by night*[1] is in favour of this. This is obviously rather a gracious token of deep desire, than a blameable evidence of human fear: at least if we contemplate this man, in relation to his colleagues, with such gentle judgment as becomes ourselves. Herder is not wrong when he says that it is unreasonable, as the circumstances were, that we should impute to him his fear as a charge; and G. Müller observes that the honourable though timid man came with a sincere and conscientious spirit to Jesus; which timidity, again, Olshausen too elaborately justifies when he attributes it to a probable softness of constitution. We have already seen, from our Lord's first gracious reception, that a sincere desire lay in the depth of his heart; and would, therefore, be on our guard against reckoning it as a fault that he did not as entirely and instantly throw away the prejudice of his error against a Nazarene as another Galilæan would have done. Especially would we forbear to speak of him as a despicable time-server;[2] who thought that if nothing came of his interview with this personage he would not be compromised with

[1] The express words of the Evangelist refute the fanciful notion of Tischendorff in his "Nicodemus," that he half-fortuitously and undesignedly found himself at the house of Jesus, on his way over the Mount of Olives.

[2] As Eichhorn termed him.

the world. For his word and act alike show his true estimate of this worker of miracles; nay, the confiding boldness shown in coming by night itself has some touch of the confidence of faith. But Hezel's remark, on the other hand, is unjustifiable, that "it would have been simple and imprudent to have gone to Jesus by day, thus needlessly hazarding reputation and all. Jesus had indeed wrought miracles, but the question was as to the inner nature of His doctrine, and Nicodemus was right in *privately investigating* that!" This is no gentle judgment, but a warped and crooked idea, itself coming in the dark.[1] Nicodemus is neither a time-server, nor a blameless seeker. It is not to be denied that some slight evil attaches to the coming by night, as is ever the case in matters pertaining to light, and a visit to a teacher come from God was certainly no business of darkness and night. Without referring to our Lord's intimation on this subject when Nicodemus departed, we may notice that the Evangelist twice afterwards refers to his visit by night as dictated by fear (comp. Judg. vi. 27), and in contrast with his subsequent confession. When, by uttering his modest question whether our law judgeth "a man" before it hears him, he drew upon himself the mocking imputation of being a Galilæan, St John describes him as ὁ ἐλθὼν νυκτός (ch. viii. 50); thereby intimating that such a testimony to the "only begotten Son" was still too diffident and too obscure, too much akin to the disciple's denial, "I know not *the man*." But the reproach is rolled away, when, drawn to Himself by Him who was lifted up, Nicodemus comes over to the Galilæans, and in company with that other who was a disciple of Jesus, but *secretly for fear of the Jews*, makes his open confession of allegiance to his King:—he is then described as ὁ ἐλθὼν νυκτὸς τὸ πρῶτον, who came by night *at first*, ch. xix. 39.[2] Hence it is also to be

[1] Still worse is what Bahrdt puts into our Lord's own mouth:—"No apology! I object to no man's concealment of his better views, while he is unable to perceive the evident and preponderating advantage in them."

[2] This variation in the progressive reference to Nicodemus decides us to reject the reading which would insert, as Luthardt does, an obscure πρότερον in the former passage. We hold with Baumgarten-Crusius that "the coming by night is a standing *predicate* of Nicodemus in this gospel. The *repetition* of it implies a contrast with his former fear; hence, according to sound criticism, a πρῶτον stands in the second passage." Schleiermacher

learned that it less becomes the learned and the rulers than others to come by night, and then, fundamentally instructed, to put such timid questions about "the man." However, if one is yet only in the night, the coming to the light cannot be wrong.

All this, however, gives us a very indefinite view of the true character of Nicodemus: but his first words of introduction and the course of the conversation will disclose the rest. The silent brevity of the Evangelist purposely deters us from seeking, at the first, a full description of his character. The Word of God generally, and each of the gospels in particular, declines for good reasons to delineate to us perfectly the subordinate personages. In the life of Jesus, all besides Himself appear only in the light which is reflected upon them by Him, His words, or His acts. His word—and His act is also His word, even as His word is His act—aims to speak *to us* in this day, and exerts its influence upon us: and, therefore, food is not over-much ministered to our fatal "historical meaning," which sets aside that truth, and would only give heed to the ancient narratives as such. *We*, sirs, we are the Nicodemus, just as far as the Lord's word to him suits ourselves; just as we are the Samaritan woman, the nobleman, the impotent man at Bethesda, and so forth. Only in proportion as we discern, through the application of His words, the Nicodemus whom they aim at in ourselves, shall be understood to any useful purpose what passed with this master in Israel. That is a miserable science which loses self in the thought of him, and forgets (to quote Richter's Hausbibel) "that what Jesus says to this Nicodemus, He is saying to most of our theologians." Not only do the Evangelists set forth all important persons—and such, more or less, are all whom the Spirit deems worthy of mention—as symbolical representatives, spokesmen, and leaders of their own spiritual class; but Jesus

denies the fear, as there had been as yet no expressed sentence either for or against Jesus, and supposes that Nicodemus chose the late hour in order to secure an undisturbed and solitary interview. But this is a thoroughly characteristic notion of its author. We very much doubt, finally, whether the Hirschb. Bibel, and many before it, are right in maintaining that Jesus already spent His nights outside the city (as ch. viii. 1, 2; Lu. xxi. 37), and that this is intimated in Jno. ii. 24.

further discerned in every individual the type of his kind, and so ordered every one of His eternal words, that they should be adapted, not to the casual peculiarities of the individual before Him, but to the essential characteristics which would perpetually recur in endless examples. To discern this is *exposition:* to fail in the personal acceptance into the soul of what is thus set forth is—the vice of science falsely so-called. This, with much else, St John had hinted at when he said,- He knew what was in man.

Yet we read, finally, in ver. 2, with what words the Nicodemus of our history approached the Lord; they are the same with which many to this day approach Him. *Rabbi!* This introductory salutation has more than the ordinary meaning, and seems to import something of acknowledgment and approximation. He knows not how fittingly to introduce himself to this mysterious One, but chooses, without hesitation, nay with full sincerity, this honourable title, without waiting for the approval of the faculty. To have followed up this title, however, by any expansion of it, or by any mere complimentary greetings, would have been altogether too circuitous for an unbidden guest at night; he must, therefore, introduce himself immediately, and state his purpose. Thus he proceeds,—*we know*, οἴδαμεν.[1] To whom does the *we* refer, in the second sentence, in which, coming alone, he seems to connect others with himself?[2] Much might be said and speculated about this, did not the *know* betray. "We know" is throughout the Gospels the current, proverbial, and characteristic formula of the Pharisees, the pre-eminently wise in Israel. The people, from whom, indeed, they withheld the key of knowledge, knew nothing of the law! (chap. vii. 49). This proud οἴδαμεν was twice thrust in the face of the blind man, who, however, learned how to give it back vigorously enough (chap. ix. 24, 29, 31). The little word was taken up

[1] The conjectural reading οἶδα μέν, has no foundation, and has long been rejected.

[2] Baumgarten-Crusius (like Lightfoot before him) disposes of it by regarding the plural as merely the expression of determinate conviction, as in chap. xxi. 24, and 1 Jno. iii. 2, v. 20. But even in these places one does not speak for himself alone; and in the present chapter vers. 7, 11, 12, in which Jesus uses *ye* and *we*, give a different view.

by the people, following the fashion of their superiors: the parents of the blind man think this the best way to defend themselves against the wise men (chap. ix. 20); and the inhabitants of the city, while they speak of their rulers, use naturally the same expression (chap. vii. 27). Yet have we here *the Pharisee*, even after he has honoured another by the name of Rabbi! But what is the meaning of the word in this present case? When the Pharisees said—We know, it signified—We Pharisees know: when the Rulers said it, it signified—We Rulers know. What significance does this give to the expression here! The *first* Ruler and Pharisee who comes to the Rabbi who had risen in Jerusalem for instruction and reformation, makes his confession in the name of the whole order and jurisdiction to which he belongs:—We know that Thou art come to us sent with the authority of God; we, the appointed guardians of the temple with whose office Thou didst so boldly interfere, the guardians of the prophetic institutions, whose right it was to ask of every man whom God has sent to Israel—Who art Thou? Verily Nicodemus spoke the truth: they all did know it, at least in the same sense as the Gentiles knew that there was one God (Rom. i. 21); that is, they might have perceived it, if they would, signified plainly in His works. The first commanding word which He had spoken, when in the temple He put forth His authority with the full dignity of perfect right, so keenly penetrated their consciences; and the word which followed it shed forth, notwithstanding its obscurity, such convincing beams, that they dared not actively oppose Him any longer, but could only endeavour to evade His meaning. And the *miracles* which were performed immediately afterwards were as incontrovertible tokens to the Rulership of Israel, long unaccustomed to such things, as to the curious common people. They therefore did know, what one of their number here confessed; had it been otherwise they might have already avenged their insulted official dignity upon the young Galilæan, who must have answered their judicial summons. But instead of this a Ruler comes by night, who has resolved upon uttering this οἴδαμεν as the confession, so to speak, of the *conscience of his order*. The others were so little disposed to such confession, were so much occupied in endeavouring to confirm their own arguments against it, that Nicodemus

only ventured to come secretly to Jesus. *So far as this goes* he said (as Luthardt remarks) more than was strictly warranted by truth. He knew himself, however, not to be the only one whose conscience was constrained to feel the Divine claims of Jesus, and therefore could speak as he did, thus generally But was he not more probably the only one who dared to utter his conviction, who was *willing to know* and avow Him? We might have thought of Joseph (Lu. xxiii. 51), but St John notes his secrecy and fear in a yet more decided manner, when *he first came* at the burial, chap. xix. 38. The officers, moreover, are reminded, when they failed to lay hold on Him who spake so mightily, that *not one* of the rulers had believed on Him (chap. vii. 48). We can scarcely think that Nicodemus spoke in the name of many more who were inclined to faith: for he would not have used this *we know!* in common with the mass of people who confessed His claims. After the crucifixion, the followers of Jesus very gradually revealed their confident *we* to a stranger who won their confidence (Lu. xxiv. 21, 22); but at this time it had not reached a point of self-consciousness which would permit its being used to Jesus Himself. The *we* of Nicodemus finds its only imaginable and deep foundation in his official relation, and in the feeling of his order. He thus modestly intimates *his own* rank, and dignity, and title; but also, half from custom, half from design, *retreats behind a community*, to which he would be disposed still to belong, even at the moment when he is taking the first step out of their conventional track. The learned member of the Faculty, and of the order, does not immediately shake himself loose of the proud *we* from which his own I is fast emerging, not even at the moment when he is making an admission with which his order has no sympathy. Even now that he is come to learn and pay homage, there is still the tone of *recognition*—something savouring of favour and protection from the high court, one of whom Nicodemus feels and represents himself to be.

We know! That was the lofty word of the learned. But Nicodemus comes not to Jesus in the spirit of explicit sincerity, as Nathanael did, who, though he comes *with a question*, has made up his mind upon the matter; he comes with a good intention indeed, yet on the other hand retreats under the cover

of others with whom he is linked, and consequently exposes himself to the anomaly of accosting the *Rabbi*, not in the language of a learner, but of a master, and in language undecided and hollow, which his next words directly contradict. We would do him no injustice when we ask—*What* it is that he knows in common with those who know. Ὅτι ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἐλήλυθας! This would appear to intimate more than the simple meaning of Rabbi with which he commenced, though its emphasis has not been sufficiently estimated in exegesis. *To come*—signified, in the first place, to appear publicly in some official character, or for some great work, as the Lord had just done. The same Lord speaks thus (chap. x. 8) concerning all who had come before Him as shepherds; and thus no very great significance was in the word itself, since every Rabbi who had gone through his probation was said to come into his office, and appear unto Israel. But to come *from God*—that had a known and acknowledged and solemn meaning: a formula which must not be pressed down to mere equality with ἀπεσταλμένος παρὰ θεοῦ, chap. i. 6. It could not have referred to the mere authentication of this mission according to Divine ordinance in Israel, for an apparent violation of that ordinance had just been seen. The expression ἀπὸ θεοῦ must have signified, when used by any Israelite, and more especially Nicodemus, *at least* a man of God, sent from on high to the people with the authority of a prophet over kings, priests, and rulers. But he does not use the established form of speech—*sent* of God, but, *come from God*, which was the form of words exclusively dedicated, through the whole of prophetic Scripture, to that One, *who was to come*.[1] It is only once used with reference to one other, him who prepared the way for the messenger of the covenant, the greatest of the prophets, and the only one concerning whom other prophets

[1] It is inexplicable that nearly all expositors forget this *here*. Schleiermacher, however (Homilien über Ev. Joh.), expresses it simply "He who was promised by all the prophets." My reviewer, Münchmeyer, forgets that I do not lay the stress upon the mere ἐληλυθέναι (though this is not used concerning the prophets in so pregnant a sense), but upon the whole phrase ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἐλήλυθας. Assuredly the word ἐξεληλυθέναι, 1 Jno. iv. 1, is used in another meaning, and with a reference inappropriate to our passage.

spake. (See Matt. xi. 3, 9, 10, 14, 18, 19.) Now this one *had come*, announcing himself as the forerunner of the Lord who was at hand. If a second *came* after him, who could he be but that One whom the two great utterances in the temple had already almost disclosed to Nicodemus.

The more thoroughly we understand how closely this acknowledgment approximated to the fundamental meaning of the οὗτός ἐστι, on the very border of plainly avowing it, the more sensibly alive shall we be to the remarkable and sudden *descent* of his contradictory words, when he utters the strange διδάσκαλος. I can only attribute it to a lack of living familiarity with biblical language, that no expositor, as far as my knowledge goes, has hitherto discerned and clearly pointed out this. It is like coming down from the elevation of the boldest faith to the most feeble sophistry; it is the most cautious retraction, as it were, after the most public avowal of a testimony. And here we most decidedly detect in Nicodemus something that is ever useless and baneful. He thinks that he has said too much, and has indeed said too much; yea, he can but say too much, let him end his sentence how he may, because he began it with that wrong word—we *know*. Mark this, ye who boast that ye know! Had he set out by declaring—*we believe* (ch. ii. 11, 23), or, as that would not have suited the *we*, by simply saying—*I* believe, or am disposed to believe, how much better would this have been, because more true, and more lowly! But now his Professor-saying—οἴδαμεν, ὅτι ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἐλήλυθας recoils upon himself as soon as it is uttered in all its dignity; for he is now speaking in the presence of One whose eye penetrates his heart, and before whom he is conscious of a feeling of perturbation entirely new. True as was his οἴδαμεν as the expression of his own, and others' conscience; now when it springs from his lips as a personal avowal, he turns quite round! No, he cannot go so far at this first tentative visit; he finds it necessary to warp, and soften his words, to accommodate them to the narrow idea of the schools —ἐλήλυθας διδάσκαλος. This is an altogether unisraelitish and unscriptural *idea* and *expression*—"a teacher come from God" —standing here alone in the whole Bible, as it came to the lips of the Master in Israel when he was suddenly retracting his open avowal. The prophets may indeed be termed sometimes teachers

in subordinate respects, but we never find this term used as the main designation of one who was sent from God; for, God sends not any one in an extraordinary manner merely to teach, but to foretell, to bear witness, to prophesy, to rebuke, to console. When the Prophets began to cease, Israel had only teachers, as Ezra (Ezra vii. 11) is first so called. But the Scribes and learned men in the time of Christ were not so foolish as our Christians are now, who know nothing but of a teaching Messiah: they expected a kingdom, a new order of things, Divine miracles and gifts of the Spirit. Nicodemus, however, by this unhappy perversion, unwittingly betrayed himself and his fellows, by showing how much they would have to depend upon new knowledge even in the kingdom of the Messiah!

And now, as his introductory words fell into so pharisaical a tone, he must continue in the same, and append to his strangely-extorted *οἴδαμεν* an orderly and fit reason for it, which may solve, if possible, the anomaly in the collocation of "come from God" and "teacher." It is with this object that he adds so formally the otherwise trite conclusion: *for no man can do* these miracles that Thou doest, except—*God be with him!* It sounds almost as if he would justify his previous admission to some one who should follow and contest it. How stiff and pedantic does the veteran Scribe appear in comparison with Nathanael, and the full utterance of his heart—Rabbi, *Thou art* the Son of God! We may supply his meaning thus:—I had almost said too much—but thus much is my stedfast conviction, that Thou art a "Divine teacher," as I have ample grounds for thinking so. *Οὐδεὶς δύναται*—here he speaks more positively, and with a tone of general assertion, which admits no dispute. He goes on first with *ταῦτα—these things*, such miracles of healing, testifying in such abundance, and with such dignity, as Thou not only hast done, but art still doing in daily succession. (Ch. iv. 45, xv. 24.) Such was the correct paraphrase of Nonnus—*τάδε πάντα πολύτροπα θαύματα*. But although this working of miracles of itself placed Him who wrought them above all ordinary prophets, he proceeds to add that impotent and almost empty conclusion—*ἐὰν μὴ ᾖ ὁ θεὸς μετ' αὐτοῦ*. This *μετ' αὐτοῦ* is far from being the *ὁ πατὴρ ἐν ἐμοί* of ch. xiv. 10, 11. It is true that St Peter begins his preaching (Acts x. 38) with some such humble pre-

paratory word adapted to the commencement of faith in his hearers, and was justified in doing so in their case, even as the similar conclusion which the common understanding of the people drew from miracles as a proof of coming from God, Jno. ix. 16, 33, was right; but Nicodemus has not here their justification. His μετά is actually the correction of the ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἐλήλυθας which he had before uttered, and seemed to him better to harmonize with διδάσκαλος; but what he says is essentially no more than what might have been said of every devout Israelite, and consequently his public words are altogether inappropriate to this great worker of miracles. It is (as Lange says) "the unconscious contradiction between the pathos of his first avowal, and the expression of reflection and fear, which played it false."

The address of Nicodemus, therefore, has *two parts*, the turning-point being the ungenuine and too cautious retractation. The outset was sincere and praiseworthy, an avowal of the insurmountable conviction and secret presentiment of his own mind and of the minds of his fellows. But he did not set out with the right word, he did not declare himself as believing, or desirous to believe, as marking or suspecting the truth, but brings into the presence of Him who was come from God his *knowledge* as if issued from the seat of the Scribes; he further kept *himself*, the man, too much in the background, making too prominent the official and dignified *we;*—and thus, while the utterance of his avowal, extorted from his hidden presentiments, skirted the very edge of the name Messiah, it falls back and deplorably sinks from this height to the level of the strange διδάσκαλος. A teacher—who doeth such wonderful miracles that they themselves prove God to be *with* him, simply, that is, with Him who *came from* God![1] In him we have the representative of all the men of knowledge, who have almost unlearned the necessity of a faith which springs from the heart; and even when the force of conviction has pierced their inmost soul, the utterance of their avowal must be disfigured and cramped by fearful reference to

[1] Zeller (Beuggener Monatsblatt 1849, 3) mentions the peasant-boy in Saxony who, on being asked if he had learned anything about Jesus at school, replied, O yes! What then? "That he was a good teacher of the people."

its various relations; who, instead of yielding themselves up as children and disciples to the influence of the truth, anxiously and apologetically give the reasons why they have come to the resolution of admitting it *to be* truth.[1] Finally it deserves to be noted, that while Nicodemus by so confident a testimony asserts himself to be able to convince all his colleagues, he yet dares only to avow that testimony by night.

The answer which H. Lössel gives to his own question, whether Christ had ever to do with a *Rationalist*, is on the whole correct: "Assuredly He had in His dealings with the Scribes and Pharisees generally; but we will pretermit them, as being wholly turned away from the principle of faith, and fix our eyes upon one only, who acknowledged Jesus,—we mean Nicodemus. His avowal is the same as that of our Rationalists, and if we follow the conversation between him and our Lord, we shall find the entire character of the Ruler delineated." We must, however, complete this by saying that he was inclined to believe, more inclined than he himself knows and says, that he is by no means a "friend of light" *a non lucendo*, but that he was as honourable and sincere as an aged Pharisee and Rationalist could well be. He does come actually to *God* in his soul's strivings, when he seeks out Him who was come from God. "The old man's humble greeting desires only *instruction*, but the earnest desire of his soul for *life* is plainly manifest." (Lange.) Or as Fresenius[2] applied the text to expound the difference between awakening and conversion, acknowledging the awakening in the case of Nicodemus, although he before had slept like all unconverted men; just as the greater part of the Jews then slept, and, in addition to that, the deep and double sleep of a Scribe, and a Pharisee and a Ruler.

The Lord, the true Saviour, who was come from God to be more than a teacher, then pierces the secret soul of the man who

[1] Dräseke, in his sermons on Jesus and Nicodemus (Lüneburg, 1828), did his best to exhibit the "Volksbesieger" as worthy of praise and imitaton in his contempt for the world, but was constrained to say more than he intended in those significant words—"Nicodemus looks at Jesus, but his regards are also in another quarter."

[2] Whose select heilige Reden über die Son-und-Festtags-Evangelien have been new edited by Dr J. Fr. von Meyer. Frankf. bei Brönner, 1845.

stood before Him, seizes his spirit vibrating between humble sincerity and proud fear, and exhibits to him his entire ignorance of that one thing which was needful. He places him, by one mighty though gentle word of His Spirit, in the position and posture of mind in which he should have come at the first.

Ver. 3. Expositors are accustomed to ask, if the Lord's single answer was a reply to the previous words. The saying concerning the new birth begins something entirely new, and would seem to have a novel, hard, and repulsive sound to the guest who had just laboriously achieved his introductory speech. Is it probable that the Evangelist has omitted anything, such as a more specific question of Nicodemus, or any preparatory sayings of the Lord, or, as Klee thinks, "all the observations and rejoinders by which the discourse had reached the present critical point of its evolution?" We deny this entirely. For we must firmly maintain, as the reply to the needless question as to the source whence St John, who was not present, derived this conversation, that he received this important chapter, as he received his whole Gospel, from the Holy Ghost; and consequently, that we cannot suppose him to have omitted anything essential to the clear understanding of its contents. To *such* a conversation as this the introduction and the starting-points are preeminently essential; as, in general, are the process and connection of the thoughts and sentiments. Though we must admit that we have in the evangelical records of our Lord's discourses, extracts only of their fundamental contents, without the individual words in detail; yet in those important *conversations* in which every word and every answer is of moment, this principle must only in a very slight degree be admitted. This is especially true of St John, who gives such conversations in their finished lifelike form, as we see beautifully exemplified in his fourth chapter. The ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν is here, if anywhere, a literal reality. But again: did Jesus interrupt the speaker, who intended to proceed and ask further questions? The answer does indeed critically meet his words, and attach itself to his expressions with all the force of antithetical rejoinder. "Thou art a *teacher*"—then *I say unto Thee!* "*No man can* do these miracles that Thou doest,

except God be with him"—*No man can* see the kingdom of God, *except* he be born again! But we must regard the former sentence as finished before the rejoinder is spoken: the Redeemer cannot be supposed to have ever interrupted the meanest person in the midst of his words; and there was both Divine and human propriety in not breaking in suddenly upon the address of Nicodemus at this time. If any account must be given of the apparent abruptness of the answer, there would be more truth in supposing that Nicodemus paused in confusion before his words were finished. And, in fact, the want of harmony between the question and its answer, lies not so much in the inappropriateness of the latter as in the defectiveness of the former. What was the real object of Nicodemus in thus coming by night? He has not clearly explained, and would have found it very hard to answer the Lord's τί ζητεῖς, if His kindness had not refrained from uttering it.

The simple man is glad that he is extricated from the embarrassment of the first failure. His perplexity heightens before the gracious but solemn eye of the Light of the world which tries his heart; and he beholds with abashed contemplation the great worker of miracles, in whom he involuntarily discerns more than a teacher with whom God is. He silently stands before the presence of Him whom he had sought, and his whole aspect uttered the explanation and conclusion of his first words —"This is wherefore I have come to Thee, that I might hear, and learn, and inquire, and seek: show me Thyself, and the kingdom of God, whose King I could fain regard Thee to be!" This man of the Pharisees stood before the Saviour of men, somewhat as that man of Macedonia stood before Paul, and cried to Him from his inner soul, which the Lord penetrated through the veil of his words and secretly replied to,—Teach me! Help me! What could be said to him but the fundamental words which would teach the true and only help for the soul of man, and the meaning of which would dawn upon the newly-awakened desire to learn them? *It is not doctrine but life that is concerned here* (as Ebel of Königsberg expounds the text)—I bring not new doctrine only, but will make new men —wholly and essentially new men, and this is the first sentence

in the Divine catechism! Luther—"My doctrine is not of doing, and of leaving undone, but of being and *becoming;* so that it is not a new work to be done, but just the being new created; not the *living* otherwise before the being new *born*." Then and only then wilt thou see, and experience, and realize all that which is now beyond thy possible knowledge. Oh that the followers and ministers of the Saviour pursued ever the same course in their dealing with such souls, and would always thus direct their unconscious longings to its true object, and trace them to their right source!

Nicodemus, indeed, knew but little better than that Macedonian people whose representative appealed to St Paul, what his real need was, and what he should ask of the Lord. *What is yet lacking to me?* This question, which no longer sprang from the mere scribe, had firmer hold of his *heart* than his *consciousness* could reveal to him. Which is the right way into the kingdom of God? or, How may I enter into it? Such questions came not to his lips. As a Jew, a Pharisee, and a Ruler, it was already a settled point that, whenever that kingdom should appear, he must, by essential prerogative, belong to it. Thus it would appear that his design was to put some deep questions as to the character of that kingdom, now apparently so near, and concerning the relation of Jesus Himself to it; those heavenly things, in short, which therefore the Lord mentions in ver. 12. It was not that he came to investigate the doctrine of Jesus, whether it was in conformity with His miracles; yet as far as he comes to investigate, his purpose was to inform his mind. His desire, as far as he was conscious of it himself, may be expressed in the two unuttered questions—Art Thou in truth He whom I had almost acknowledged Thee to be? And what, then, will take place at the opening of this new kingdom? Deep in his heart however—and this is the great point—there lies another better desire. He is already kindled, and touched by the influence of the Spirit; this secret impulse gave him no rest at night, sent him to the Lord, and it was this first germ of the new birth which He regarded when He spoke so suddenly and so plainly concerning it. It was with him, as with many of his kind: the heart sees further than the head, the inner man better than its outer utterance; he comes with

some measure of humility, else would he not have come at all, but that humility is unhappily veiled in the appearance of pride; his deepest desire is towards spiritual influence, but it is misapprehended by himself, and degenerates to carnality. The Searcher of hearts discerns all this, and beholds his secret susceptibility. He will attract yet more entirely this secret yearning, and at the same time overturn the hurtful impediment of knowledge: He therefore directs one word to his head and heart alike, the paradox of which stimulates every thought and feeling in both, and which should be the starting-point of further discourse.[1] All further circuitous bye-phrases are at an end, and the poor sinner is brought, with all his half-proud embarrassment, directly to the great *matter* for the sake of which he had been unconsciously led to Christ by the Spirit. Not a word is spoken of the impropriety of occupying the night which closed a day weary with good works:—it was at least late evening, the time of sleep. Jesus was not only ready, even at night, for all who might seek Him; but Himself sought the lost, wherever they were to be found, even at the time of mid-day repose, as afterwards at Sichar. This not being mentioned in the Scripture, the expositor has nothing to do with it; save that the confidential, nocturnal hour would have been yet another argument for hastening, without any delay, to the great and fundamental subject.

Nicodemus appeared before Jesus with an "acknowledgment which had evidently somewhat complimentary in it," paying Him honour and respect, which did not, however, spring from the right source. Jesus therefore diverts him to

[1] Lössel speaks rather one-sidedly, and too much in that Pietist tone which He elsewhere rebukes—"Does He not here cut off suddenly, and ex abrupto, the poor threads of reason, as if Nicodemus had never yet begun to spin aright? Does He appeal here to the head, or to the heart; to the reason, or to faith? To the *heart*, beloved, for we see in Nicodemus *(whose reason immediately stood still!)* that the reason derives nothing from the faith."—Not so, my beloved, for we see in all the Lord's discourse nothing but rational thoughts, and the heart can only derive its influence through the reason placed in its right position. We prefer to say with Dräseke—The Lord gave him such matter of *thinking* and *investigation*, as his whole Pharisee-life had never given him before.

the consideration of Nicodemus himself. "Say nothing now of Me and My being sent from God, but *think of thyself!* Thou thinkest that thou knowest much, and shalt learn more from Me: now I will tell thee what before all things thou must understand, if thou wouldst know who I am, and what thou hast to expect from Me. First must thy own need be known, then will it profit thee to hear of a helper and redeemer. Thou wouldst begin at the omega, I will begin at the alpha, and thus teach thee the whole alphabet of My doctrine in that one word *born again.*" This is taught, first, in hard and mysterious figure, in order to humble the master in Israel, who understood not this, though as a man he needed it, to the position of a learner: the discourse afterwards rises by degrees to a less figurative, simpler, more intelligible method of teaching.

Word answers to word, so that there is no room for any omission. The ἀμὴν ἀμήν of Him who came from God overpowers at once the οἴδαμεν of the master in Israel: O that in our day the wise would let the Amen of the true and faithful Witness overpower them! *I*, the teacher come from God, as thou hast confessed: O that all who call Him their Teacher would become attentive learners, when He begins to speak! I say *unto thee*, who didst enter with thy emphatic *we*, yet disposed to hear *Me* rather than others: I discern thy integrity despite evil appearances; I will answer *thine inner man*, which utters a better question than thy lips; I will confide to thee the best instruction which I have for thee. This is indeed, at the outset, a most solemn word! Thus does the Lord draw him out from behind his *we*, while He speaks out His own I: and places him immediately and at once among all mankind, without distinction —ἐὰν μή τις.

We now have reached the fundamental word of this wonderful discourse—γεννηθῇ ἄνωθεν. But this ἄνωθεν, the verbal ambiguity of which St Chrysostom left undecided, makes us pause to ask whether we are to interpret it "*again*" with Luther, or "*from above*" with the greatest part of modern expositors. We see in it, and we may say it at once, a snare for interpreters, such as is often found in Scripture: and for our own part hold with Luther that this is the catechetical word in

the church's elementary instruction upon *regeneration.*[1] Ἄνωθεν might indeed be equivalent to οὐρανόθεν, as in ver. 31 of this same chapter, in ch. xix. 11, 23, of the same Gospel, and similarly again in Jas. i. 17, iii. 15, 17; Matt. xxvii. 51; Mark xv. 38. This would appear, indeed, to suit the connection, especially ver. 2. In that case the "born from above" would, in addition to the other references already mentioned, contain an answer to the "come *from God;*" signifying that not only must every teacher in His kingdom, but every man who would enter or see it, be of God. And in this case, further, as the "enter into" of ver. 5 would illustrate the "see" of ver. 3, so also would "of the Spirit" explain the "from above." For the Son of man does, indeed, bring down from heaven the Spirit of regeneration, vers. 13, 31, 34. This interpretation, also, would make prominent a thought which in itself is of great importance; —that we cannot of ourselves, by our own knowledge and will, press into the kingdom of God; but that that kingdom *comes down to us,* through a heavenly new birth by the Spirit of God. Hence Origen, Cyril, Theophylact understood it οὐρανόθεν; Erasmus rendered it *e supernis:* and even Bengel declares in its favour, supposing that Nicodemus had lost sight of the ἄνωθεν, in fixing his wondering thoughts exclusively upon the γεννηθῇ. Lücke relies much upon St John's phraseology, in which the being born of God occurs, but not regeneration; Baumgarten Crusius thinks that the connection of the conversation decides for it; Lange determines for the οὐρανόθεν; and even Otto von Gerlach abandons Luther's exposition as the church has confirmed it.[2] But we do not: for it is obvious in ver. 4 how Nicodemus understood our Lord, and there we find merely γέρων ὤν and δεύτερον. This, however, would not be decisive, if it can

[1] Many congregations, however, read in the Zürich translation—von oben herab (from above). But de Wette did not venture to utter "von neuem" (again).

[2] On the other hand, Kleuker affirms—"from the beginning:" and Neander is not induced by Lücke's reasoning to prefer "from above." Luthardt, too, justifies the reasons—which I have here developed. Hilgenfeld, adhering to his birth "from above," distorts the sense, understanding nothing of the being born *again;* and foolishly explains the condition to be that man must anew belong to the pneumatischen Menschengeschlecht!

be supposed that Nicodemus misunderstood them. Now if the Lord used the direct expression "*from above*," Bengel's idea of its being overlooked by Nicodemus would be out of the question: he would assuredly have been first obliged to ask concerning this ἄνωθεν or οὐρανόθεν, and could not have thought of entering, being old, his mother's womb—which is only the expressive "*denuo*" made more strongly emphatic. If the Lord used an ambiguous word like ἄνωθεν, the misunderstanding might have arisen which was corrected in ver. 5. But then the Lord must have spoken in the Greek tongue, for in the Hebrew or Aramaic there does not exist, as Grotius forcibly showed, any such ambiguous expression: but in a conversation with a member of the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem, the Greek language is not to be thought of. Lampe's *non verosimile* says too little, for the ambigua vox is in the case of our Lord's language simply impossible. In spite of all this the Lutheran Boss will not translate with Luther: but among many other things which he properly maintains, he will not make ἄνωθεν a Shibboleth.

This is our main reason for accepting the rendering of the ancient version, such as the Vulg. *renatus denuo*, the Syriac מִן דְּרִישׁ (in which Baumgarten Crusius finds, without any reason, a third), and in the same way the Copt., Arab., with Nonnus, and so forth. But why did St John choose the ambiguous ἄνωθεν to express *denuo*, if he only designed to convey ἐξ ἀρχῆς, πάλιν, or δεύτερον? Because the ἀναγεννᾶσθαι of later Christian usage (1 Pet. i. 3, 23, comp. παλιγγενεσία, Tit. iii. 5) could not have been appropriately put into our Lord's mouth; and πάλιν[1] and δεύτερον do not express with sufficient emphasis the meaning of ἄνωθεν, "from the beginning" (Lu. i. 3, Acts xxvi. 5), or *altogether anew* (Beza: *derechef*), on which account Gal. iv. 9, and Ecclus. xix. 6, unite the words πάλιν ἄνωθεν, returning back to the στοιχείοις. Further, it might be asked why the

[1] Tit. iii. 5, in connection with ἀνακαίνωσις, does not refer to the first birth of Adam from God, as Kœnig (Menschwerdung s. 24, 43) strangely maintains. Braune (Stud. u. Krit. 1847, 2) refers to the πάλιν γίνεσθαι of the LXX., Job xiv. 14, although without necessity in a word which was very familiar in profane literature. All the more objectionable is it that he will explain the ἄνωθεν of Jno. iii. 35 by the ἐκ θεοῦ, 1 Jno. iii. 9—probably without having seen the reasons which I allege as opposing this.

Saviour, if, as we said above, He would make His expression correspond to the ἀπὸ θεοῦ of the inquirer, did not say plainly ἐκ θεοῦ, or the equivalent of the Greek οὐρανόθεν. Others may find, but we cannot, the idea of being born *of God* developed in this whole conversation: the subsequent conversation does not expound the birth from on high, but enforces the truth and reality of another birth, after the analogy of the first physical birth, that is, vers. 6–8, of being *born again*. St John's phraseology, upon which Lange lays such stress, furnishes no other instance of this, simply as the ἐκ θεοῦ γεννᾶσθαι does not recur in our Lord's words. This latter belonged to the *apostolical* development of Christian language; but the being born again or anew was a phrase already extant among the Jews, *to which the Lord here attached His own word in order to be understood by the Pharisee*. It is well known that at the baptism of Proselytes (see such passages as Ps. lxxxvii. 4–6) a new birth into the family of Abraham was spoken of; that the converts were regarded as new creatures (בְּרִיָּה חֲדָשָׁה), as new-born babes (comp. 1 Pet. ii. 2); and that even repentance was generally compared to the being again born as children.[1] With this the expression in ver. 5 ἐξ ὕδατος well accords; reminding of baptism and repentance, but quite irrelevant to οὐρανόθεν. Thus the apparent grounds for the opposite view are invalidated, and we must regard this place simply as parallel with the saying to the unhumbled disciples in Matt. xviii. 3. In this latter passage the correlative idea of *conversion* to new life may be more prominent: in the passage which we now consider the essential principle of that external change is more expressly pointed out. The *birth* is a figure; nay more, the physical birth is only the type of that more essential birth which is unto the life of the Spirit. Mere change of *life* suffices not, nor any mere change of *thought;* for the perfected μετάνοια must spring from a new, and mysterious *principium*.[2] This cannot otherwise be stated:

[1] בעל תשובה צריך להתדמות כאילו היום נולד—a penitent man must be like one to-day new-born. Jr. Gibborim, Fol. xix., Col. 3. Thus we have here the μετάνοια, which is so remarkably wanting in the whole Gospel of St John, apprehended in its full results, in a Rabbinical expression.

[2] If our Lord, by being born again, means only reformation of life, instead of making any new discovery, He has only thrown a great deal of obscurity on what was before plain and obvious. Wesley.

the necessary ordinance of nature in reference to human birth, as appointed after the Fall, Gen. iii. 16, is shown to have a prophetic reference to the new birth of the sinner. As no man can behold the light of the living without being thus born, so *can* no man in the kingdom of God without this new birth. It is impossible in the nature of things. The Lord says not *may*, but opposes to the "no man *can*" of Nicodemus another "*can*" yet more emphatic and sure. The mystery and marvel of its origination, both in the case of the natural and the spiritual birth, is lost in the first creating fiat of the omnipotent God. That origination is in agony and sore travail, as chap. xvi. 21 describes it; there may be "gentle new births as there are easy births," yet is there the struggle of life with death. The new life is only born at first, in order to continuous growth; but the germ of all increase is given at the birth. Many other relations and analogies might be traced, of which, however, Nicodemus understood but little at the first. Enough that the Divine Teacher gave him the most solemn assurance that *every man* must experience this new birth, even though he be a master in Israel: and in ver. 7 this most absolute necessity is impressed especially on himself, and such learned in Scripture as he.

In the term *kingdom of God* the Lord lays hold of the Jew, by the fundamental idea of his national expectation and hope. This expression, "not current elsewhere in St John" (it occurs in a different relation chap. xviii. 36), indicates that the Evangelist is giving here the Lord's own discourse, as it was adapted to His hearer, without modelling it according to his own style of writing. The prophets had predicted this kingdom, the orthodox doctrine had shaped its idea into expression, the Baptist had announced its coming and nearness, but it was for the Spirit alone to open the new eye to understand the θεοῦ in its connection with the misunderstood βασιλεία. The *seeing* is the result of the being or existing, the child must first be born in order to see. For Nicodemus it signified:—Thou canst not form a right idea of this kingdom, or appropriate and understand it when it is taught to thee, until thou becomest an altogether new man, essentially, and from within.[1] This is the answer to

[1] I must maintain this distinction between ἰδεῖν, and εἰσελθεῖν in ver. 5, though perfectly aware that רָאָה in scriptural language signifies to experi-

his well-devised question :—In these things a living perception and experience alone avail; without that I stand before thee, and thou seest Me not, I may speak to thee, and thou wilt not understand. Thou askest—how and when cometh the kingdom of God? Whereas it is already nigh thee, yea, without thy knowledge it is already begun in the principle of thy eager question.[1] Thus thou canst not worthily acknowledge Me as the King,—even shouldst thou call Me yet more distinctively the Messiah, the Son of God,—while thou interpretest those words according to the carnal reason of thy people and thy order, according to the system which a perverted misunderstanding of the prophecies has formed. Thou knewest not what thou saidst at thy first coming. Thou canst not see and comprehend those greater signs and wonders which the Saviour performs in the souls of sinners, until *thine own* soul, through entering the element of repentance unto faith, hath learned what thy need of such a Saviour is, and what that restored kingdom of God over men is, which is opposed to the Jewish notion of a worldly dominion. Without the early beginnings of a renewal of the nature, there can be no understanding perception, and still less can there be any saving and renewing faith: that first repentance which responds to the command μετανοεῖτε contains the influences of the Spirit which are unto the new birth. None can experience Divine things, by mere learning and knowledge of themselves. "The kingdom of God is nothing into which a man can think, or investigate, or study, or read, or hear, or talk, or discuss himself: man can only experience his way into the kingdom of God." (*Dräseke.*) *To see* the kingdom of God, is a phrase which includes all from the first perception and experience of the beginnings of that kingdom up to the full par-

ence, or attain to. But it is not without reason that they are distinguished here; and the seeing placed first, in order to show its dependence upon experience, and justify the Lord's words. Luthardt's critical remark, that this style of opposition was used because Nicodemus had supposed that he saw the beginning of the kingdom in the miracles, leads, as far as it is correct, to the same conclusion as my exposition.

[1] Such a *presupposition*, that the kingdom of God is actually near, and already begun, must be regarded as involved in our Lord's answer to the question which might be asked, how one may or may not be able to see. Teschendorff's paraphrase excellently supplies this.

ticipation of the blessedness of eternal life. It is therefore fundamentally equivalent to the *entering in* of ver. 5; to have a right idea of it, and to participate in it, are one and the same thing. There is no such thing as "seeing the kingdom of God at a distance," as Braune energetically says. That which was *typically* exhibited to the patriarch Jacob, when God revealed to him in a dream that influence of His heavenly might, which descending upon earth to bless, and guide, and guard, His own, makes earth again the house of God and the gate of heaven, was no other than the kingdom of God then shown to him (Wisd. x. 10); and as Jacob attained to it, in the lesser degree of the Old Testament, when in wrestling prayer he became Israel, so also must we all in the full consummation of the New Testament experience.

But Nicodemus at that time understood not all this. He seizes only the paradox of another birth thus unexpectedly thrown in his way. Without calling to his mind what upon this subject he must have heard, or read, or *known;* without giving himself time to consider that this word was not so severe as it seemed, since *to be born* could not be required of any one as a command, rather promised and bestowed as a gift; *he breaks out at once into the unadvised utterance of the first impression made upon his mind* —as in ver. 4. He must reconcile his thoughts to something which his experience through life had never brought to his mind before; and he finds himself very unapt. No man ever thus spoke to him before, such things had never entered his mind, either as a disciple in his youth, or as a master in his age. He had come joyfully and confidently that night, with the consciousness in his soul that he was coming to the light, and with more sincerity than his reverend fellows: doubtless he anticipated with eagerness the answers, and disclosures, which he should receive from the marvellous one. If his own unabsolved conscience somewhat disturbed his joy on entering, yet might he expect to be praised for his avowal; and if he did not give pleasure by his visit to Him who was come from God, yet he might assume that the only ruler who paid Him honour would receive some slight honour in return. And now the wonderful one by the answer to his very first words heightens his perplexity, and repels him with such a strange and embarrassing word! He thinks

that he has both learned and taught much concerning the kingdom of God, and now, without any respect of his person and dignity, he is told that he has no eye wherewith to see this kingdom, until he is born again, and begins to live anew! He might have entered into the general meaning of the expression, if his thoughts and feelings had been tending that way. For he was not ignorant of many sayings of the scribes, and of the Scripture, which might have aided him. The discourses of the prophets, which he himself had not always literally understood; yea, the entire system of the teaching of the day, so full of figure, parable, and proverb, should have saved him from the danger of so entirely misapprehending the mysterious figure of the Divine Teacher. He does indeed mark, in some slight degree, whither the words tend; but he does not spend a second thought upon this, so entirely is his nature excited, and so entirely has he lost his presence of mind.[1] Hence he commits the same error, though in a lighter degree, as his colleagues shortly before in the temple; he will not understand, and takes offence at the letter of the unwonted words. He acts somewhat like the Samaritan woman afterwards when the living water was offered to her; and like the people, still later, when the bread of God, sent down from heaven, was set before them. The learned man does not go beyond the unlearned, in his dealing with spiritual discourse concerning those heavenly things, which are designed to become earthly things also, and have become such already for our need. He actually falls behind them. For that woman did say—*Sir, give me* this water; and the multitude did say—Lord, evermore *give us* this bread; but this learned man does not call Him Lord, and when his learning fails him does not humbly ask, but erects himself in his ignorance, and begins to *dispute*—How can this be! Is such a thing as this possible! Thus did the masters in Israel deal with the profound contents of the Old Testament, and beheld not in them the kingdom of God. So deal still the successors to their wisdom in our day, and ask in their folly concerning the open testimony of the New Testament to the mysteries of the king-

[1] Bengel also, animosius objicit. Ebel yet stronger, "who does not detect the injured ruler, who expected that an acknowledgment of the Nazarene would meet with a different return?"

dom of God—What do these things mean? And even the convinced Nicodemuses among them cannot deliver themselves at first from the delusion; cannot free themselves from the "fond bias of the learned to dispute" (as Zeller calls it), till God in His grace give them better views.

Thus we can neither say that Nicodemus did not understand the Lord, nor merely that he would not understand Him. Both are involved together, and as in his first words he was unable to give utterance, clearly and fully, to his inmost thoughts, so in his second saying we have not his sincerest feeling. He perceives something, but not enough to fix his mind upon; a certain offence at his unflattering reception adds to his confusion and perplexity. In order to say something, he utters hastily what first came to his lips; what seemed to him the surest expression he could use, but was, in effect, the most foolish and unbecoming answer which he could have given; he childishly asks—How can a man be born when he is old?

His offence betrays itself, with involuntary natural feeling, in the repeated δύναται, which the Lord had given him back, and which, after the fashion of disputants, he once more retorts. This was not the way to speak to a teacher come from God! He saw clearly that the Lord's λέγω σοι aimed at *himself;* but he does not bring his own I out of the general mass, as the Lord had designed. The question would have run much better and more simply—How can *I* be born again? and that might have brought him to a clearer consciousness, and more collected comprehension of the Lord's meaning. But he falls into the predominant habit of the scribes, who made the most concrete matter abstract, as long as they could; and conceals his conviction of the personal reference to himself under the clause γέρων ὤν, that is, when a man is so old as I am. It must be remembered that γέρων is more than merely adult, it refers to the advanced age of Nicodemus.[1] But as soon as he has uttered this first sentence, it happens as it happened before; he is not satisfied with it, and it must be amended. In the former case, he had said too much and must qualify; in this, the objection is

[1] Not including, however (according to Lampe), a *moralis indecentia*, that an old man should *begin quite anew*, for so much as this Nicodemus did not yet understand.

not strong enough, and he must strengthen, if he would sustain it. For to the simple question—How can a man be born when he is old? a most obvious answer was at hand, which must have been whispered to his conscience; just as many other objections to truth have only to be uttered, and their groundlessness is immediately felt by the objector. That simple answer was—The words have a figurative signification, and none other possible! But though Nicodemus must have taken shame to himself that he had put the question, yet he will not confess to himself, still less to Jesus, that he had understood it in any degree aright: he *is disposed* to proceed with a kind of contradiction, and improves, as he thinks, but in reality renders more offensive his first words. He hangs petulantly upon the letter, throws into his words the faintest tinge possible of irony, in allusion to the sacred *verily* of the Divine Teacher, and goes on with his stronger protest—Can he enter *the second time into his mother's womb, and* thus, according to Thy express word, *be born?* While he thus seems to take the Lord's words on their absurd side, he only makes himself pitiable, and feels this as he proceeds to his second question. The ἄνωθεν which the Lord had used, and which made prominent the idea of a new beginning, thus serving to explain the γεννηθῇ, was something quite different from the substituted mere δεύτερον, once more, a *second time* altogether over again like the first. But Nicodemus is not thoroughly in earnest with his saying about entering a second time into his mother's womb; his second sentence, like the first, wavers undecidedly between its two clauses;—he does not altogether say what he would, nor does he speak out what he would say, but his whole address savours of the fear, and the obliquity, of coming by night.[1] This psychological apprehension of his state of mind alone saves us from the two extremes of interpretation—on the one hand, that of supposing Nicodemus obtuse enough actually to understand the Lord's words literally, and on the other, that of attributing so lofty a conception of His meaning, that he could himself confidently continue His figurative language. Schleiermacher (and

[1] Even Dräseke, "as is the wont of lofty ignorance, which *would not* lie, but *cannot* do otherwise than lie, because it mistakes itself."

after him, Baumgarten-Crusius) is an example of the latter, and represents Nicodemus as sufficiently clear in his views to say boldly: "How shall the kingdom of God become established among men, if those who shall see it must renounce their whole past life, and put on a life altogether new? For this is hard to man, when he is old," etc. To express this more plainly—How can such a fundamental change upon the fully formed thought and character of a man, as may be likened to another birth, be possible? How, for example, can it be predicated of an old man, such as I am, that he should begin all again, as a little child? That would be as little possible, *using thy figure still*, as for me to enter once more into my mother's womb!—Ebrard, though he perceived the confusion of thought in this, has not precisely hit the mark when he says, "in such cases one involuntarily speaks as if adopting the obvious literal meaning of the words, and showing that this will not suit, uses it as an indirect illustration of the deeper meaning." For all these enforced expositions rest their measure of truth simply upon the fundamental darkness of the man's inner mind; he utters words of objection which are not carefully pondered, and they fall back upon his own heart. We should interpret the whole with knowledge of human life, and some penetration into the phenomena of man's soul, and shall thus better understand not this only, but many similarly graphic records of man's sayings in Scripture. Such Nicodemus-questions are those which are so plentiful in our days—Am I then only a miserable sinner? Must God's Spirit alone work within me? Is not this happiness and joy blameless? and so on, questions which are answered in the feeling of those who put them, as soon as they are uttered.

Thus, then, Nicodemus has put all *his* questions. He has first made prominent, as afterwards in ver. 9, the proud, and curious *How* of all those whose boast is to know, and to seek to know —*How* can a man be born? There is, however, something modest in the curiosity, for the πῶς presupposes the possibility of an explanatory οὕτως. But, in his second question, his much more highminded word δύναται stands alone, without any qualification—*Can* he enter a second time? He will thus in his blindness see the possibility of a thing which he shows to be impossible, before he will admit it as a reality.

Ver. 5. The Lord foresaw, and designedly extracted from him, all these words. He leaves unnoticed the πῶς and the δύναται, but once more asserts what He had said, with an appended explanation. He knows well how to *answer* every man in the most intelligible and profitable manner. He takes Nicodemus' question in a different sense from that in which he seemed to mean it, and goes straight in His simple dignity to the man's inner soul. For He knew full well that "the questioner was better than his question," and that, however much it resembled it, the question was not one of haughty repulsion—"If we have to wait till people are born anew, the kingdom of God appears to be a hopeless thing!" He does not condemn, therefore, the apparently proud recoil, because He sees that the questioner is already self-condemned; He rather lays firmer hold upon his soul, for He knows that, under the semblance of recoiling, it has actually drawn nearer to Himself. Just so we shall find in the case of the Samaritan woman, that He draws her more effectually to Himself, the more apparently she seems to be alienated from Him. In His meekness and patience He does not impute to Nicodemus his unreasonableness, perversion, and folly; He repeats His repelled but tenacious *Verily*, which He, the Eternal Truth, must so often repeat to erring men. We see the same profound condescension and forbearance in His third answer, ver. 11; each of the three instances being pointed by the deeply-significant λέγω σοι.

The objection of Nicodemus unconsciously confirmed what Jesus had said: the experience of the natural man attests that the old stem cannot be bent, the matured nature cannot be reversed; and this is simply re-stated. But instead of the general ἄνωθεν of the beginning, against which Nicodemus' contradicting δεύτερον had stumbled, an explanation is now added—ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος. To the insight and apprehension of the πῶς this explanation might, on the one hand, appear dark, while it, on the other, clearly and expressly indicates that the γεννηθῇ refers to a spiritual birth of the inner man through the power of God's Spirit. The repeated λέγω σοι signifies, at the same time, *with regard to this*—Hear rightly what I have already said, and what My meaning was; couldst thou not, or wouldst thou not, take note of it? If the word had been *merely* ἐκ πνεύματος, spirit-

ually or by the Spirit, that is, of God, it would have appeared both for Nicodemus and for us much more plain, as coinciding with many Old Testament sayings concerning the converting, yea, new-creating operations, of the Divine Spirit upon men. But the *water* preceding seems to introduce a new obscurity. It only *seems* to do so, however. The whole course of the colloquy, as we have understood it hitherto, must have prepared us to observe that Jesus no longer intends to make it difficult for Nicodemus to understand His words; but that, after having provoked him to outward contradiction and inward discernment, by His just darkly veiled saying, He will now render His meaning plainer and utter the second Ἀμήν as διδάσκαλον ἄνδρα διδάσκων, according to Nonnus. We must reject, therefore, in seeking the *first* and *primary* meaning, all those far-fetched interpretations of the water which could never have entered the mind of Nicodemus;—such as an inward birth of repentance; or a first negative stage in the new birth related to the second and positive process, as the water which cleanses is related to the invigorating, life-giving Spirit; or some supernal water, that is, fundamental element, of the new creature. The Lord first of all mentions this water as conveying to Nicodemus himself an idea which would aid his understanding, or (according to Dräseke) as being "a sign in the times, with which the new birth was just then closely connected," pointing obviously and immediately to the *baptism*. If the idea of the *new birth* referred, as we remarked on ver. 3, to the phrase used concerning proselytes who were baptized, what was more obviously to be thought of than that baptism with which John had so solemnly baptized all Israel for the *kingdom of God?* The Evangelist also, in his first epistle, v. 6, 8, designates Christian baptism by the same simple word ὕδωρ. But it is not the Sacrament of the New Testament which is here immediately intended, since the baptism presently afterwards mentioned (ver. 22, ch. iv. 1, 2) was only a continuation of the preparatory typical baptism of John. When he heard of being born again *of water* for the kingdom of God, it should have flashed upon the mind of Nicodemus with as much clearness as if spoken—Didst thou not then think of him who came in the wilderness, My forerunner? Nicodemus must have been abashed that he should have forgotten the import of what had

occurred, and that he should, in his confusion, have put so irrational a question after it had been so publicly testified that the Jews must become new men, even as they required it of the Gentiles, when they baptized them into Jews.[1] It is highly probable, yea certain, that Nicodemus had thought little of the Baptist who wrought no miracles, and had acted as in Luke vii. 30. This disregard the Lord exhibited as a neglect of a Divine ordinance to which even the Messiah Himself had been subject. And in fact if Nicodemus had, with such earnestness as his was, confessed his sins and been baptized in the wilderness, he would have been better *prepared* to come to Jesus now. In this we find a universal intimation for the Nicodemuses of all times and of all religious views, that they should not think it enough to come to the workers of miracles; that they should not, because they are rulers or scribes, reject any teaching which is appointed *of God* for their salvation, any humbling external usage, the meaning of which commends itself to the conscience as truth.

But this of itself is far from exhausting the depth of our Lord's meaning in this word, for all His Divine sayings reach beyond their first application to those who heard them, having the future church in view. Especially is this the case with those *first* testimonies, which broke forth from the long-restrained fulness of His soul, and to which this utterance, spoken in personal collision with a representative of the best, and most instructed Judaism of that age, manifestly belongs. In the addition *καὶ πνεύματος* there lies a *prophetic* reference to that baptism which was afterwards elevated, as the fulfilment of its type, into the initiatory sacrament, the distinctive introduction into His kingdom; and which in Mark xvi. 16 is so solemnly established as the external condition of salvation. Nonnus only follows the well-founded tradition of the most ancient exposition, when he says that Jesus fore-announced to Nicodemus *βαπτίσματος ἔνθεον αἴγλην*. Moreover, let the Baptist's intimation be recalled, ch. i. 33, and let it be marked how the Lord unites the two things, *water* and *spirit*, which in that discourse had been put in con-

[1] For all considerate criticism must admit that some rite of washing corresponding with the later baptism of proselytes was already extant when John appeared, or otherwise John's Baptism would lose its most significant point of connection

trast. Ye must be born again in a baptism, which is not merely with water, external and typical, but through the Spirit inwardly and essentially purifies and renews; in a baptism of the Holy Ghost—which I, the greater than he, will soon introduce, as it was predicted. (*Herder:* the baptism of John is not enough!) We may resolve the juxtaposition thus—Of water, which brings the Spirit; or—Of the Spirit, which is the true water. In any case there is no ἐν διὰ δυοῖν,[1] but the external and internal baptism have both their legitimate place, and Meyer's note runs with entire correctness—"Jesus speaks here concerning a spiritual baptism, as in ch. vi. concerning a spiritual supper; in both places, however, with reference to their visible auxiliary means," though we would substitute for this last expression conditions and instruments.[2] The Lord even places the water *first*, so that Wesley's inversion is incorrect—Unless he experience an inward change through the Holy Ghost, and is then also baptized. Nor should we with Calvin (by ἐν διὰ δυοῖν again) make the water a spiritual and internal baptism. The word is as fully sacramental as that of Tit. iii. 5, λουτρὸν παλιγγενεσίας, which involves and includes Christian baptism.

Having thus surely defined the first meaning of the words for Nicodemus himself, we may then, but not till then, seek to discover those deeper references for all futurity, which are the ὑπόνοια of this most solemn utterance, but which we were compelled to decline, when they prematurely obtruded themselves upon our attention. Very many false expositions derive their error from their onesidedness, either hastily extracting the deeper

[1] Lücke says rightly concerning this ancient view, which erroneously appealed to Matt. iii. 11, that we may now regard it as done away—that is *so far as* it assumes to give the first and only meaning. Else we must be cautious how we reject the fundamental truths lying in many expositions which authenticate themselves at last by a deep accordance in the central meaning.

[2] Hilgenfeld finds the Lord's Supper and baptism very decidedly introduced in St John's Gospel, but his grounds are very peculiar. His remark, however, upon our text is quite correct:—these words are so definitely referred to baptism in the citations of Justin and the Pseudo-Clementine writings, that it requires some boldness to aver, as Neander does, that the mention of water is only something subordinate, to impress by a symbol the power of the Spirit.

meaning without heeding the intervention of the external, or carelessly neglecting the deeper meaning in undue regard to the external element. The *water-baptism* is itself a symbol or *word* of high significance, which in the "water" tells us of something more than water, and it is to indicate this that we find here and elsewhere ὕδωρ instead of βάπτισμα. *Wherefore*, then, is the *water* prescribed? Because as the water of baptism it is designed to signify that living water which is the gift of God—thus making the two discourses in chs. iii. and iv. parallel—that water which is itself the Holy Ghost according to ch. vii. 38, 39, or rather the symbol and instrument of the infusion of His high influence. In the passage just quoted, as in the entire Jewish ceremonial to which it attached itself, we are referred to a long series of Old Testament sayings, among which Ps. xxiii. 2, xlii. 2, 3, lxv. 10 (Cant. iv. 15); Isa. xii. 3, xliii. 20, xliv. 3, lv. 1; Jer. xvii. 13, may be especially consulted, and compared with Rev. xxi. 6, xxii. 17.

Further, the operation of the Divine Spirit in the regeneration of man is first of all a *purifying* energy in connection with the expiation of guilt (Eph. v. 26; Jno. xv. 3), the condition and foundation of which, on our part, is repentance;—hence the baptism of John was no mere empty ceremony, but for the penitent an actual half or initiatory baptism. This penitence, again, as it is a believing appropriation of the *word* which bringeth mercy, may be regarded as an external baptism, which may be likened to the baptism of water.[1] But then the *vivifying* energy of the word penetrates the soul as the perfect bath of regeneration and renewal, of quickening and invigoration,—as the figurative bath of water acts in the lower life—and *this* is the true ground of all sanctification unto such good works as are wrought in God. Both stages of the washing away of the former life (Acts xxii. 16), the death and destruction of the *old* man, and the attainment of a *new* breath of life, are expressed in the mysterious formula *water* and *spirit;* just as we find them both expressly according to their order in Ezek. xxxvi. 25–27, the only prophecy of New-Testament baptism, comp. Heb. x. 12.

[1] The word is a baptism, hence Luther correctly gives his comprehensive interpretation of our text—"Preaching and baptism, and the Holy Ghost connected with them."

But, finally, it is here as in all the figurative language of the Divine economy; the final fulfilment is performed and latent in the first rudiments, and in baptism the final *glorifying regeneration* of the body in the resurrection is foreshadowed. The word and symbol of water prophesies of something which, both for the individual and the whole renewed earth, is analogous to the first period of creation (2 Peter iii. 5): for there are yet waters above, that is, elements, corporeities of a higher kind: see Gen. i. 7; Ps. cxiv. 3, cxlviii. 4.[1] Let him who has even the slightest idea of the correspondence and typical relation of the two worlds, the higher reflected in the lower, the future reflected in the present; let him who has any realising idea of the נוֹרְאוֹת נִפְלֵיתִי of Ps. cxxxix. 14–16, discreetly consider the *θεῖον* in the *φυσικόν* of physical birth. For that actually takes place *ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος*: the fruit, already in the moment of conception created of water and spirit (as Gen. i. 2) through the conjunction of the *aura* seminalis with the receptive fluid, is afterwards nourished in *water* (liquor amnii), attaining to full life and breath when it finally enters the air of this world.[2] So the earth is for the body of death, for the embryo souls which have not yet reached their full development, the mother-womb of us all (Job i. 21; Ps. cxxxix. 15), while for the new men properly so called there remains the city above (Gal. iv. 26)—and thus there is so far a literal *δεύτερον εἰσελθεῖν*.

But let us leave all this, and fix our thoughts on that which is obvious and clear. The man, and much more the child, can scarcely hope to understand the *physical* mysteries of his birth; let us therefore give our attention all the more earnestly to the solemn conclusion—*οὐ δύναται εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ*. We have already had occasion to observe that the Lord thus makes *ἰδεῖν* and *εἰσελθεῖν* coincide and illustrate one another.

[1] Andreas Wagner's Geschichte der Urwelt has done justice to this biblical Neptunism, in opposition to the Plutonian geology which Goethe never would tolerate. Comp. Rothe's Ethik. i. 142, concerning the primary fluids.

[2] Against Nasse's theory, that it is the first respiration which informs with life, Ennemoser maintains a preparatory breathing of the fœtus, and quotes as proof the position of Geoffrey St Hilaire that in the liquor amnii there is present a respirable gas. (See Ennemoser, über den Ursprung und das Wesen der menschlichen Seele ii. Aufl. s 72.)

There is no such thing as attaining to a preliminary critical inspection and knowledge of the kingdom of heaven from without, a theoretical acquaintance with the domain of the Spirit by chart without travelling in it; the *coming* indeed in a certain sense must precede the seeing, chap. i. 39, 46. Mark this, ye premature investigators of revelation! Ye can only see when ye have come and entered in; and how many a Nicodemus is only beginning to come, nor will understand until he has come effectually. This rests upon a truth which is fundamentally presupposed, though many find it hard to receive it, that man, according to his first and natural birth, is essentially outside the new element of the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ and of the πνεῦμα; that there is in him an inborn character opposed to the kingdom of God, and thus that an entrance into it is possible to him only through the merging of the old birth in one entirely new. And it is concerning the fundamental necessity which lies at the foundation of this οὐ δύναται, with its redoubled Ἀμήν, that the Lord goes on to speak, when He places the flesh in sharp contrast with the spirit.

Ver. 6. That which is born of the flesh is flesh! This simple declaration, which should have been quite intelligible to the scribes of Israel, introduces a new, and *convincing* element of clearness into the dark discourse. Oh that all our modern scribes, who have the New Testament added to the Old, could learn from their united teaching, and from their own essential inmost experience, the meaning of that little word σάρξ! He only who knows what that means will be preserved from taking offence at the δεῖ γεννηθῆναι ἄνωθεν. The Saviour, speaking to one who was a son of the Old Testament, takes advantage once more of a reference to that preparatory revelation; just as He had previously taken for granted the existing idea of an expected kingdom of God, and of an operation of God's Spirit in connection with that ordinance of baptism for the washing of sin which already existed by scriptural warrant in Israel, but had received through John the confirmation of express Divine sanction, and as He had further taken up the very words which were then used in regard to the becoming a new man. Let us then place ourselves with the master in Israel under the old economy in order to understand this new word of our Lord.

The definite article in both cases, *τῆς σαρκός* and *τοῦ πνεύματος*, of itself suggests this, noting something that was already well known, and present to the consciousness of him who was addressed. The auxiliary middle-term *ἐξ ὕδατος* the Lord now entirely drops, since, on the one hand, the external baptism, while it is the symbol and sacrament of the internal, is yet *as* external not so absolutely necessary, and on the other, all the profound and essential truth in the *ὕδωρ* is involved and included in the *πνεῦμα*.

The *first occurrence* of words in Scripture has its peculiar significance, as we have often said and demonstrated. When God beheld in Adam created good by His hand that first thing which was not good, a deadening sleep (the prelude to his future death!) fell upon him, the woman was taken out of his side, and the *flesh* was closed up instead thereof, so that the man also said, "this is now flesh of my flesh, and we shall be one flesh;" and since that first mysterious occurrence of the word, the expression has ever borne in it the accessory idea of weakness, unfitness for the condition of perfect self-contained strength and manhood, and in addition to that, for the most part, of sinful lusting and contradiction against the holy law of the Creator. A second time we find it used in the equally mysterious account of another and peculiar progeny of sin (hamartigenie, as Nitzsch says), the mixture of the sons of God with the daughters of men—men are *flesh*, My *Spirit* therefore can no more rule and control in them. From this time we learn that all flesh had corrupted his way, and even after the flood we find that still יֵצֶר לֵב הָאָדָם רַע מִנְּעוּרָיו—from his youth, that is from his very birth. The passage most decisive in the Prophets for the interpretation of the word is Isa. xxxi. 3 with its twofold contrast. Human nature is not simply morally weak, but bestially corrupt through inherited and accustomed sin; when the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it in revelation and judgment, all flesh withereth like the grass, and all its glory like the flower of grass. Isa. xl. 6, 7. If all flesh is ever again to know and rejoice in the salvation of God, and to receive the Lord as a Saviour and Redeemer, it must be by the fulfilment of Joel's prophecy, chap. iii. 1; the Spirit from on high must not merely rebuke from without by law and commandment, but inwardly renew, and make clean,

and rectify, what was radically wrong; that Spirit must be given unto men and transform them into other men with other hearts. Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. David, in Ps. li., is conscious of all this, and pours forth accordingly his earnest desires. And may not the Lord be regarded as having referred Nicodemus to scriptures like those with which he should have been familiar? But how hard the avowal—*οἴδαμεν ὅτι σὰρξ ἐσμέν*! *Τὸ γεγεννημένον* with its definite article expressing the widest universality, makes it plain that *man* as such, and *every man* is intended, but it comes home to the mind and conscience of Nicodemus with all the force of a keen personal question—Dost thou not know, thou man of the Pharisees, that thou art flesh in common with other men, and what that imports?[1] It is not *πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος* as afterwards, ver. 8, but more emphatically and definitely in the neuter; and thus is asserted that most important and incontrovertible principle, which holds good also in the higher and lower orders of the creature, and in all nature, that everything born is in its true quality just what its source and original is—from flesh only flesh can come, and from Spirit only spirit; from the earth only the earthly, and from heaven the heavenly; from corrupted man only corrupt humanity, and from the Holy God alone that which is holy and meet for His kingdom. (Compare the Baptist's word, afterwards, ver. 31.) Nay, it is yet stronger: that which *γεγεννημένον* is altogether *flesh*, flesh once more like that from which it is born, and not merely *fleshly*—although this, when it occurs, is to be understood like the former. Further, it is a reply to the foolish objection of Nicodemus—even if a man could be born of his mother's womb a second time, what would he be but the same *flesh* again? Without the Spirit, thy new life would be just like the former over again! *There are two births, and the former is only one of them;* the second is strictly another, distinct, and opposite birth. Thus does the Lord teach the man in the scribe, whose foolish wisdom had unlearned or neglected the simplest elements of scriptural instruction concerning the simplest facts of humanity,

[1] Lampe cites a passage from Euripides, Electr. Act. 2, where the word involves such an avowal—*αἱ δὲ σαρκὲς, αἱ κεναὶ φρενῶν ἀγάλματ' ἀγορᾶς εἰσιν.* But this in its connection, and in the heathen point of view, signifies something very different.

and more especially their practical application to himself, explaining to him by degrees the great mystery of a new birth of the Spirit, concerning which every master in Israel should have already known enough to enable him fully to understand the rest when it was set before him more plainly. He illustrates the idea of a new *birth* by the *similitude* of the former: but the birth of the spirit by *contrast* with it.

The neuter here embraces, as Bengel strikingly observes, ipsa prima stamina vitæ, Lu. i. 35. *That* which is born of the flesh is in the very first beginnings of its existence, on that very account, nothing but flesh, even before it has become the man *who* is born: it is born in guilt, *conceived* in sin, mortal *flesh*, "fashioned to be flesh in the time of ten months, being compacted in blood, of the seed of man, and the pleasure that came with sleep." (Wisd. vii. 2.) For there is no king that had any other beginning of birth (Idem, ver. 5), nor any scribe or ruler; the first voice which he utters is crying, as all others do, in testimony that another evil thing had come into creation. The impersonal neuter points to these hidden beginnings (to which the Evangelist had referred in his antithesis, ch. i. 13), just as they are indicated in Lu. i. 35, and Matt. i. 20. But pointing forwards also it inexorably includes every personality of man, all that is born of woman by the will of man, and the *entire* man just as he is born, so that there is nothing in him which does not lie under the decree—this is flesh born of flesh! The *spirit* in us, *inasmuch* as it originates from God, may in a sense be exempt; but (contrary to the denial of Hegelianism) even this is not, so far as it is now *born* into the flesh. Therefore it is infected through and through with selfishness and vanity, disobedience and pride. And all that which a certain class in the present day vaunt as "the *spirit*," does indeed belong to the *former* portion of the sentence, in contradistinction to the *Spirit of God*, from whom alone regeneration comes. "All that man purposes as of his own will, and performs as by his own power, can but hinder and interrupt the new birth." All the love of the *natural* human spirit is now selfishness or caprice; all its strength, skill, and power is simply impotence as it regards the one object of its return to God; all its science and wisdom mere folly and blindness in things which are Divine and heavenly.

Let no one condemn this as a hard saying and inflexible dogmatic; it is the solemn, clear, and merciful testimony of the only begotten Son of God, who was born in our flesh and condescends to our infirmity; who was Himself without sin, and therefore most keenly perceived, most sharply resented, and most fundamentally revealed the sin which existed in humanity, related to Himself and confided to Him. Yea, inasmuch as He is not speaking only of sin, but of *infirmity* also, when in a scriptural sense He opposes the spirit to the flesh, He has within Himself experience thereof, bearing by participation with us the fruit and consequence of our sin in His flesh, but overcoming it by the eternal Spirit. He is not indeed *one born* of the flesh, and therefore in ver. 7 can only say ὑμᾶς: He descended indeed into human nature from heaven as the Son of man, through the operation of the Holy Spirit in Mary His mother, and according to His higher nature is ever not only in the kingdom of heaven, but in *Heaven* itself, ver. 13. But not the less on that account is He an actual Son of man and Man, inasmuch as He is at the same time *in the flesh*, in our flesh, into which He had come, 1 Jno. iv. 2; Rom. viii. 3. Thus He has given us to know in the days of His flesh (Heb. v. 7) His weakness in His obedience, the recoiling of His flesh from the agony of a voluntary performance of the Spirit's will, Matt. xxvi. 41. See here the most mighty and effectual demonstration of the all-comprehending truth of the position—*that which* is born of the flesh is flesh: thus much, no less than all that is in every one of us; thus much, something at least in the Holy One born of the Holy Ghost. So much did He contract from the flesh, at least, as its passive resistance to the Spirit. What can ye say, ye false masters, against this avowal and acknowledgment of the Holy One which is also confirmed throughout the whole history of His passion; against such personal testimony from Him who hath joined Himself to us as much as our redemption required, and therefore all the more solemnly speaks that which He knoweth, and testifies that which He hath not only beheld with eyes of Divinity in us, but hath also for our sake seen and experienced in Himself! The mystery of original sin is so plainly revealed that, as Luther says, du es an *deiner* Nase greifen kannst, you see it plainly in your own face; so plain, indeed,

that something, in some sense connected with it, adheres even to the sinless Holy One of God, something, however, for which theology, anxious to escape error, has found no name!

But in *your* case not merely is the flesh weak, but the spirit is not willing: the I of the inner man is carnal, sold under sin. Would you deny this as if unconscious? Is it not undeniably true that *your* experience, in all the conflict of the law of your mind, acknowledging the goodness of the Divine law, with the law in your members, invariably forces on you the conclusion—*We* are but flesh and blood, and all that is of flesh and blood in us, must ever fail of the inheritance of the kingdom of God! There must be *another experience* through a new birth, in order that you may be able to add—but that which is born of the Spirit, is *spirit!* Not, assuredly, such spirit as that which so terms itself, not that which the "flesh of this age" is perpetually proclaiming as such.

Ver. 7. Nicodemus kept silence a while, "sunk in thought"—a pause which we could desire for many of our readers. The μὴ θαυμάσῃς with which he is immediately addressed indicates that Nicodemus sinks into *astonishment* before the gradually dawning light of the Lord's words, so that he remains without a ready answer. The gracious Lord, who hastens nothing, allows him a short space for this wholesome sentiment, before He with affectionate blame recalls him from it. He penetrates him with the searching inquiry—Is it not true, that it is so? Is it not true in thine own case? Touched as he is, he cannot answer Yes, but his earlier spirit of contradiction is quite cast down He *marvels* at the marvellous word, which begins to disclose, to hint more impressive signs than those by which he had discerned, as he thought, one come from God. He is in a fair way to do what until the moment when he came to Jesus he had neglected, and what the whole design of the Divine words aim at—to turn his knowledge inwardly upon *himself*, not merely to avow what he with others knew concerning another, but what is in his own soul because it is in man generally, as the Lord knew it without human testimony. He is in the way to become conscious of that *awful distance* between the condition of fallen nature and the requirements of Divine truth and righteousness to which all his past dealing with Scripture, and

his own conscience, should have already led his mind; and he is very near to the perception *that* no man can, and *why* no man can, stand accepted before God without an absolute and fundamental change. But even now that his heart is beginning to guide his understanding, that *reason*, which had never penetrated or understood *these things* as yet, interposes its hindrance. He must even yet *marvel*, though now in silent and thoughtful astonishment, before it had broken forth in foolish and precipitate words. (The Lord's word does not refer to that saying in ver. 4, which was rather a *σκανδαλίζεσθαι* than a *θαυμάζειν*.) His subsequent question already springs to his lips—how can these things be? but gives place to the other—are these things so? Have I, then, all my life long known and yet not known this fundamental concernment? The Lord anticipates him, however; helps forward the secret movements of his spirit towards the full light of convincing truth, and by this *μὴ θαυμάσῃς* seems to say to him—Receive this testimony with confidence, for it is true: listen only to the voice of the Spirit who speaketh in My voice, and not to the thoughts of thy own foolish mind! Think not that strange concerning which My word hath *twice* been—Verily, verily, I say unto thee! But gainsay no longer, and wonder not that *I*, to whom thou comest for Divine instruction, *have said to thee*, without any distinction or exception of person, what I now *for the third time* declare, and I believe not in vain—*Ye must* be born again! All ye who are born of flesh, not I who am come from heaven, and am born of the Spirit; *ye* Jews and men of Israel not less than others, as John did rightly baptize you for the new creation of the kingdom of heaven; *ye* rulers also, who utter your *οἴδαμεν* so confidently, though your knowledge is only fleshly of the flesh, so long as it discerns not itself, and seeks not in self-knowledge to find the Spirit! Gainsay it no longer, and wonder not that I have, as it were, confronted thee again and again with *ἐὰν μή τις—οὐ δύναται*; receive it, for it has all the absolute force of an unconditional Δεῖ. Truly the mystery of which I speak is for *wonder* and *astonishment*, and he who does not *thus* begin will never apprehend it aright; but this amazement of *thine* is not of the right kind, for thou art marvelling that thou dost not understand and didst never till now know of

this mystery, instead of marvelling at the great *mystery itself* thus brought near to thee. If thou canst not yet comprehend it, yet receive it as the voice of truth: for there are many things in the world which thou hearest, and hast no doubt about, yet understandest not their secret principles. As, for example, what now follows.

Ver. 8. Up to this point the Lord had designedly thrown a stumbling-block in the way of Nicodemus' understanding, in order to humble him by his own foolish words, and make him susceptible to further discourse, while His last answer was, to that end, all the more penetrating and convincing for his heart and conscience. Now that his conscience becomes conscious, and only his reason marvels at the mystery uncomprehended, it is time to administer some further help to his apprehension of its meaning. This is ever the most effectual method of preaching the mysteries of truth to those who are susceptible, and in spite of all appearances such did the Lord discover Nicodemus to be. But the Teacher from God does not enter upon any attempt to demonstrate the nature of light to the capacity of blindness: He does not speak as if He either could or would explain to demonstration for the thoughts of flesh, the whence and whither and how of the Spirit's influence, and satisfy the question trembling upon his lips—*how can* these things be? For every one who knows anything of Divine truth might reasonably ask —and how could this be done? The point of the Lord's answer consists in its convincing Nicodemus that, as there were many things immediately around him which he knew and understood not, he could not reasonably marvel that some things incomprehensible pertaining to higher matters were presented to his mind. Even natural reason can perceive thus much, that it is not absolutely necessary for the acceptance in faith of the testimony concerning the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, that those mysteries themselves should be penetrated; that the incomprehensibleness of the truth and evidence of anything is no disparagement of it in matters of higher experience as well as in lower; that in all experience generally the perceiving and hearing and accepting upon faith is ever essential; and that consequently it is in the highest degree irrational to doubt, hesitate, and deny, when a higher experi-

ence is in question, simply because the manner and process is not understood. Thus must we through reason die to reason, even as through the law we die to the law. (Gal. ii. 19.) Thus we discover that faith alone is rational and intelligible, that it is the true science and erudition to learn and be taught, and that the reason which vaunts itself so much is most perfectly unreasonable.

When that long-tried sufferer, who, sore troubled in the *land of counsel*, murmured at his trials because he could not discern God's *counsel* in them, Zophar vainly reminded him—Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; *what canst thou know?* The measure thereof is longer than the earth and broader than the sea. If He cut off, and shut up, or gather together, *then who can hinder Him?* For He knoweth vain men (מְתֵי־שָׁוְא): *He seeth wickedness also;* and will He not consider it? For *vain man would be wise* (acts as if he had true understanding, which, however, he first has to seek, יֵשׁ נִבּוּב יִלָּבֵב),—though *man be born* (so dead and blind to spiritual things) *like a wild ass's colt.* When the Lord answers out of the whirlwind, making His appearance as the Præses disputationis, and puts a termination to the *philosophical prolegomena* to the book of Moses in this *porch* of the sanctuary,[1] His words run in the same strain—Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up thy loins like a man (if thou wouldst as one oppose Me)—for I will *demand of thee*, and *answer thou me!* Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? *declare, if thou hast understanding!* Knowest thou — —? Hast thou perceived — —? Canst thou — —? *Declare thou*, knowest thou all this? And in all these the tempted man who fruitlessly disputes about the mystery of

[1] This is the significance of the *book of Job* in the Canon, as Moses must have obtained and composed it in the wilderness. The time will come when *this* will be understood, and such fundamental wisdom of original revelation will cease to be ascribed, as it is now by some of the best, to a later poet in Israel! Oh that the Lord would give me time and strength before I go to my grave, to express my living apprehension of the meaning of this book of Job! But this I must leave to others.

his afflictions—for such is Job in the *most universal* sense—hears questions uttered to him from the *lower* creation; questions not merely concerning the foundations of the earth, the depths of the sea, the path of the light, and the place of darkness, but also concerning snow and hail, rain and dew, thunder and lightning, down to the dust growing into hardness, and the clods cleaving fast together—those most familiar objects in his path which are as much mysteries to him as the bands of Orion and the sweet influences of Pleiades; concerning the lion and the young ravens, the wild goats, the unicorns, the peacocks, the behemoth and leviathan—all as incomprehensible to him in the lower symbols as their antitypes in the world of spirit. See here the true use of natural history and geology as the modest propœdeutics of the revelation of God, very different from that à la *Ballenstädt*. Then from the creation referring to the Creator, it proceeds—*Who* hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart? (ch. xxxviii. 36.) Gesenius, indeed, in his Lexicon which anticipates exegesis, rationalistically perverts this—quis renibus *tuis* indidit *hanc* sapientiam? The טְחוֹת are rather the reins and mysteries of nature in general, in which we suspect the wisdom which we cannot recognise without the Creator's interpretation: שֶׂכְוִי[1] is the idea manifest in the טְחוֹת, or the comprehensive form of the φαινόμενον,[2] the distinguishing בִּינָה of which He only can exhibit who inlaid that into it. In short, Job is cast down by the *exhibition of the incomprehensible things which are even in the lower creation*, and is constrained to answer—Behold I am vile; what shall I answer Thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice, but I will proceed no further. *I know that Thou canst do everything*, and that no thought (however wonderful) can be withholden from Thee. (לֹא יִבָּצֵר מִמְּךָ מְזִמָּה.) Therefore have I uttered that I understand not; things too wonderful for me,

[1] Which Jerome, after the Rabbins, makes into a cock. Michaelis and Cocceius find in it the Samaritan סכוי oculos!

[2] This is somewhat suspected in the ποικιλτικὴ ἐπιστήμη of the otherwise strange Sept. Oetinger interpreted—Who hath inlaid the wisdom of the sensus communis in the innermost mystery? but understand "the mysteries of the material world." Comp. Auberlen S. 70, 150.

which I knew not. *I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee.* Wherefore I abhor myself (as it becomes sinful man before God), and *repent* in the dust and ashes (of my impotence and mortality; נִחַמְתִּי, give myself to bewail it by that μετάνοια which is ever in itself the only key to right understanding).

Just as Jehovah speaks there, the only-begotten Son speaks here to the contradicting doubter—The Δεῖ which thou hast heard remains firm: wouldst thou understand it altogether and beforehand? wouldst thou know the whence and the whither of the *Spirit*, and knowest not the origin and the end of the common wind? wherefore dost thou not marvel concerning the air which breathes around thee, and of which thou livest?—The Lord derives not his example from the stars, nor from the multitude of earthly things around; but He takes that most obvious and most immediate thing, the *air* or breath without which we live not from our earliest birth, which surrounds us always, penetrating our bodily frame without ceasing;[1] and points to the mystery of the *free motion* of this earthly air, assuredly one of the most remarkable mysteries of lower nature. And this is all the more striking an example, inasmuch as almost every language has used, in unconscious truth, the air in *motion*, or *wind*, as the symbol and figure of that Spirit of whom our Lord is here speaking. Thus the word πνεῦμα leads us to its lower signification, which again refers back to the higher. The Spirit washes and purifies like water, as we saw above; it further *invigorates* and vivifies, as the breath of vital air keeps alive the body from the instant of its birth. (ἀνάψυξις, Acts iii. 20.) Hence at the day of Pentecost wind is the representative of the Spirit's influence, and in the Old Testament a wind of the Lord and the Spirit of the Lord are convertible terms (1 Kings xviii. 12, comp. Acts viii. 39), as in the beginning when He brooded over chaos. Now because the Greek πνεῦμα and the Heb. רוּחַ alike signify both wind and spirit, and the Lord seems designedly to use the ambiguous word, it has been thought by many

[1] So far Dräseke's reference to *respiration* is not utterly a misapprehension. With equal propriety might the doubting question have been just—how can a man be *born* generally? Yea, how can anything *live?*

that He means *only* the Spirit, and they translate—der Geist geistet, the Spirit breathes His influence, where He will. But this premature interpretation lets go here, as in the ὕδωρ of ver. 5, the middle-term which was designed to aid Nicodemus' understanding. And it is evident from the nature of the case, and the process of the whole conversation, as it is obvious from the words which follow, that the Lord uses a real comparison in this οὕτως —*so*, like the "spirit" or *wind* of nature which thou hearest, is (the Spirit concerning whom I speak, and therefore also) every one that is born of the Spirit. The identity of the word for both, in consequence of which the mention of wind was a continuation of the discourse on the Spirit, makes the comparison all the more striking; but it cannot be reproduced in translation excepting through a paraphrase—the natural spirit, that is, the wind, breathes or blows also in such a manner that thou canst not understand it.[1]

It is needless to ask if a night-wind was audible at the moment, for the comparison is sufficiently express without that both in the word and in the matter. It is more important to observe that πνεῦμα is properly only the more gentle motion of the air, not the ἄνεμος or stronger gale; though this distinction also escapes in translation. Luther's translation "sein Sausen," instead of "seine Stimme," is not to the purpose, rather damaging to the sense, even without reference to the ambiguous φωνή as applied to the Spirit. Though the blowing is to such a degree that it is not merely *felt* on the hand or face, but the sound of its gentle murmur is *heard*. (1 Kings xix. 12. קוֹל דְּמָמָה דַקָּה.) "The Holy Spirit also begins His influence with the gentlest whispers."[2]

But now for the question as to the meaning of what follows,—Thou canst not tell whence the wind cometh and whither it goeth. (Ποῦ is equivalent to ποῖ, as always in New Testament.) It might have been replied, with more than Nicodemus' hardness of apprehension—It comes from the North quarter and goeth to the South, as the weathercocks everywhere tell us. But inas-

[1] Πνεῦμα occurs only Heb. i. 7, in the sense of wind; and πνεῖν, here associated with it, nowhere else.

[2] Nonnus says excellently—ἀγχιφανὴ δὲ φωνῆς ἠερίης θεοδινέα βόμβον ἀκούεις.

much as there is a θέλει in this πνεῖν, as well as and besides the *not-known* πόθεν καὶ ποῦ, it might on the other hand have been thought that the *Spirit* only was signified. But we must endeavour to understand the true emphasis of the word *know*, and those other little words *whence* and *whither*, as the Lord uttered them, or at least intended them to be understood. How often does the proud physical science of the children of men imagine to itself that it *knows* something concerning the φαινομένοις, to which it has only given a name, though only their most external influences and their most obvious manifestations are seen. But science *knows* and *understands* nothing of the internal connections and secret principles of things. It is one thing to say without hesitation—It comes from the North or the South; and another to comprehend the *whence* of it coming, that is, in what place it *originated*, and from what causes it is precisely what it is. No meteorologist can understand the derivation of wind and weather, however confident his predictions may be: he may guess, and speak his guesses as if it were his knowledge, but such knowledge is in reality too high. God alone knoweth, who hath made the weight for the *winds*, and weighed the *waters* by measure! (Job xxviii. 25.) Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven and in earth, in the seas, and in all deep places. He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth (ascending upon our horizon); He maketh lightnings for the rain (causeth the electricity to send down its influence); He bringeth the wind *out of His treasures*. (Ps. cxxxv. 7; Jer. x. 13). The *original* and proper *genesis*, the true תּוֹלְדוֹת of anything in nature, we understand not anywhere or in anything; as it is said further—Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew? out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath *gendered* it? (Job xxxviii. 28, 29.) These sayings of Scripture, or rather of the Lord in Scripture, express not the limited physical knowledge of the then inspiration of the Spirit, but spring from eternal wisdom, which would cast down much of our modern physics into the dust, if it were only heard and acknowledged. The "treasures of God," out of which He bringeth the winds, are not the mythological basis of the cave of Æolus, but the cave of Æolus and many a like mythus showed itself in its humble presentiment of the θαυμα-

στὸν and θεῖον to be essentially much wiser than the speculations and schemes of our Christian Physics.

There is in the *wind* especially a distinctive and fundamental mystery of nature: we speak of it as *moved* or *moving*, the air in motion, but what the principle of that motion is, and whence it originates elementally, we know not. The wind is, more properly speaking, the mover and exciter itself, spiritus commotor et rector, power without matter; it is, as it were, the spirit of nature itself;[1] or one of its most eminent messengers, or the bearer (cherub) of the high commissions of the Divine power. (Ps. civ. 4.) The wind is "in and of itself the mighty breath of God," and although we liken, following scripture example, anything that is idle and naught to the wind, yet does the stormy tempest tear up mountains and break in pieces rocks, which no element can do—such a weight hath the Lord made for the winds, and such power lies latent in them.[2] The Scripture gives us some hints to be pondered concerning the quickening wind, in the chariot of God seen by Ezekiel, chs. i. and x. But all its mighty powers are connected by the same principle with its faintest movements, only just audible and scarcely otherwise to be perceived: and the same Lord whose voice is heard in hurricanes and earthquakes announces His presence also in the faintest whispers of the breeze. The air, as the substratum of the wind and on the very verge of matter imponderable, is itself full of mystery, being the sustenance, in some sense, of animal and even vegetable life. The motion of this air or its blowing is the most express symbol of the free impulse of *concealed power* (and is not that the proper idea of πνεῦμα?), and whenever we come in contact with *that*, our knowledge is at an end. The wind bloweth (as the Spirit breathes) where it will; that is, of course, where God will originally, for He bids it *come* and *go*, and it is

[1] Comp. φύσις, generation, birth, nature, with φύω, *fuo* in its fundamental meanings, φύσα, φυσάω.

[2] Comp. von Meyer's Blätter für höhere Wahrheit, vii. Seite 43, 67, 90. Further, what Beck throws out (Bibl. Seelenlehre S. 27–29) concerning the element of spirit which breathes through the physical world as wind, the motion of air as the first and last influence of physical life. Kahnis says truly—"the wind is the natural symbol of the Holy Ghost, not only in mere language, but according to nature."

His purpose which it subserves in heaven and upon earth. Finally, since we cannot comprehend the *whence* so as to interpose our own will, and interfere with the assigned course of natural manifestation; still less can we understand and control the *whither*, the end and aim of the free impulse, so as to bend it to our own views. (We may *use* the wind for our mills, and organs, and sails; we may, indeed, artificially, regulate it, but we cannot turn it in the direction we wish.) The wind which listeth is free, unmanageable, working mightily in its influence, and in all incomprehensible. For in all things the whence is only to be understood from the *whither*, the end from the original, *life and death only from birth.* When the Preacher is warning against over-anxious and subtle inquiry about things which admit of no certainty, and says—He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap (he, that is, who is over-anxious beforehand as to its being favourable)—he adds with a strict connection in the thought—As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit (or the *wind*), nor how the bones do grow in *the womb* of her that is with child; even so thou knowest not the *works of God* who maketh all. (Eccles. xi. 4, 5.) We can scarcely think that in those words to the Scribe the Lord refers to these words. We are free to find such allusions elsewhere; but here the same Spirit is merely coinciding in similar words with His former meaning. Assuredly we can no more understand any birth, or *our own*, than we can the *birth* of the wind; and thus the individual man and the whole human race remains, in its beginning and end, a concealed and impenetrable mystery.[1]

Having made some advance towards our Lord's meaning in mentioning the mystery of the wind to Nicodemus, let us now proceed to the further application of the similitude, and interpretation of the example—as our Lord anticipated it from the beginning. It was not merely *κατὰ προσωποποιΐαν* that the Lord ascribed a *will* to the wind as the spirit of nature, but be-

[1] "Man, the crown of creation, is himself (that is, now in his degradation) the greatest riddle of creation. He stands upon an islet between two eternities, upon a bright point between two nights which have neither beginning nor end, and knows not whence he comes nor whither he goes." J. G. Müller.

cause this semblance of independent will is actually the impress and expression of the Divine, creating will of the Holy Ghost. The *Spirit breathes* essentially where He will (1 Cor. xii. 11), and we *hear* His *voice*, which second expression is therefore expressly selected. Nicodemus then indeed heard the voice of the Spirit, which in the words of Jesus so mightily and keenly appealed to him; and the Lord's saying, thus mingling figure and interpretation together, pointed his thoughts that way. For the question is here of perceiving or hearing, feeling and experiencing the power and influence which is undoubtedly present and excited upon the soul. The *hearing* is, as it were, the lowest degree of feeling, through the vibration of sound, from a distance; and every *voice* is in some sense a blowing of spirit upon myself. Where a voice is heard, there must something breathe and make the sound; and thus the Spirit of God is recognised and perceived by His voice. Faith cometh ἐξ ἀκοῆς (Rom. x. 17), and that not the external voice of words necessarily or alone, but, at the same time and sometimes only, the internal hearing of an inward voice. The close of the sentence has a very deep and manifold reference:—*So* is every one that is born of the Spirit, that is, thus is it with the Spirit; consequently thus does it proceed with the being born; consequently, further, with that which is born, which according to ver. 6 is itself spirit again. Our Lord assuredly, first of all, means Himself (using a condescending expression, which ranks Him as originally and first born of the Spirit among those who are born again),—Himself, whose voice Nicodemus is *now* hearing, and His present testimony, which the hearer now begins to feel in its power as a testimony *of the Spirit*, now indeed begins rightly to *hear*. This may grate upon *our* ears, accustomed to other usage in defining our Lord's person, and we may very properly wish to avoid thus speaking of Him as ranked among those born of the Spirit; but when we realise the circumstances of the moment and place ourselves in them, we shall be constrained to observe the obvious naturalness and necessity of our Lord's thus speaking of Himself. We found in ver. 6 that He there in some sense referred to His own person; and in ver. 11 it will be made evident, by the opposed *we*, that He had spoken of Himself in ver. 8 as born of the Spirit. Nicodemus had indeed asserted that he knew the

Lord to have come from God, when he had only *seen* the miracles; but now he also hears the words, out of which the Spirit breathes upon him, blowing he knows not rightly whence or whither—for he was far from yet understanding the "from heaven" and "to heaven" which were afterwards in ver. 13 set before him.

But we may not suppose that the Redeemer spoke only of Himself when He said—*πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος*. He, indeed, is the only Son of man who is of the Spirit from His mother's womb, so that He never needed *πάλιν* or *δεύτερον γεννηθῆναι* (apart from that *Umgeburt*, that birth out of death which He underwent *for us* upon the cross); but *every one* who believeth on Him and receiveth His Spirit, becomes like Him in His humanity, restored into that condition in which Jesus was from the beginning as the first-born of many brethren. Our Lord's expression thus contains an assurance of the highest moment, which defends us alike against the supernaturalist dogmatic of Reinhard, and the candid avowals of Michaelis;[1] attesting to us that the Spirit's influence and witness to Himself is given in appropriate voice, which in its kind is *audible*, and not only to those who are themselves born of the Spirit, but perceptible also to those who are *near, or in contact* with them. Thus we may confidently declare and appeal to every man—*ἀκούεις*, just as the Lord does to Nicodemus; for where the Spirit willeth to blow (and that is, in fine, everywhere), there He bloweth verily and in truth! "The Spirit and His influence must be discernible as Divine, not only to the possessor, but to those who are round Him. The opposite opinion is fanatical, and leads to enthusiasm." (Pfenninger in Repertorium fur denkende Bibelverehrer ii. 1. 135.) We say more plainly, it is heretical, predestinarian, and destroys all general invitation. Bengel expresses it very beautifully:—homo, in quo spiritus spirat, e spiritu *respirat*. Round about the place where the Spirit is are the tokens of His breath, just as every one feels the wind upon his person, and according to its strength and his own keenness of observation, its voice is also heard. The assurance of 2 Cor. iv. 2 holds good for ever;

[1] Dogmatik S. 92. "I honestly confess that I never received any such testimony of the Holy Spirit."

and especially in the case of opposers, who resist in unrighteousness the spiritual truth which attacks them, and to some of whom it was plainly said—"We are His witnesses of these things; and *so is also the Holy Ghost*, whom ye will be found to fight against as *θεομάχοι*, not hearkening to us, and to God, whose witnesses we are!" (Acts v. 32, 39.) Where the Spirit thus announces Himself, He manifests the freedom and power of His authority and will, being as certainly *perceptible* to our observation, as *inscrutable* to our understanding. And man, instead of hypocritically, foolishly, and petulantly inquiring into the possibility of such influence, should hear and attend, and yield himself up to its experience, not thwarting, but co-operating with the work of God upon his soul: more than this he cannot do towards his being begotten and born of *God's own will* (Jas. i. 18), which is the final ground of the new birth. So runs it—Let every man be swift to hear, when the Spirit breathes!

So is it with every one that is born of the Spirit, and thus it is with the mediation of every one so born between the Spirit and other men. But marvellously *manifold*, and utterly inexplicable to us are the diversified voices, testimonies, instrumentalities and methods, inward and outward, by which the Spirit finds His way to the heart of man, seizing this man in one way, and that man in another, defying all investigation and question, and reducing all over-curious subtilty, as well as all rash opposition, to silence before the great truth—*τὸ πνεῦμα ὅπου θέλει πνεῖ*. Much might here be said concerning all the methods of the Divine grace in the conversion of man, and all His ways in effecting man's regeneration, as we have them dealt with, though only in faint echoes of the thunder of His power, in the books of Reiz, Tersteegen, Schubert, Kanne, and so forth. So also of that which immediately follows—the free process of the spiritual life, by reason of which (as Dräseke says) "the physiognomies of the new birth are as diversified as those of the natural man." Saving, however, and keeping inviolate, the essential unity of the one Spirit! The Spirit comes *from God*, and will come *to us*—when we begin to understand *that*, and to breathe in the new life, to see the new light, then *are* we already born! Although the original *whence* of this life in free grace, and the *whither* unto eternal life—remains for ever a mystery hid in God.

The struggling Nicodemus is now at least half conquered and convinced: he ventures no longer to deny and contest as at the beginning; he repels no longer the voice of the Divine Teacher speaking every moment more audibly to his understanding and to his heart; he becomes more and more conscious of the light and life of the Spirit in Him who speaks, of His authority from above, and of His *Divine Power* over himself. He begins to see a great and new light, He begins to experience a mighty and new life. "Though he does not yet apprehend Christ's word, Christ's word apprehends him" (Lange). There is in him a certain inclination to submit himself to this great Δεῖ, to yield his mind to further instruction and influence; he almost possesses what had been proffered to him. But the inveterate habit is strong, he is unaccustomed to admit truth simply into his heart and conscience; he still supposes that the great matter must be one of *knowing*, and fixes his mind upon *understanding* the *how*. The actual longing of his heart is consequently masked in his thought and words; taking the form of his ancient head-religion, or (salvâ veniâ, ye learned!) coloured by the tincture of his learning. Thus he thinks—"could I but *understand* the matter, and the means which lead to it!" And this it is to which he next unhappily gives expression—*how can these things be?* The abashed γραμματεύς is now almost thrust out of his chair, but cannot, however, with all his voluntary submission to the πνεῦμα, abstain altogether from bringing forward once more his πῶς and his δύναται: but it is no longer uttered in the spirit of contradiction, it has no longer in it any magisterial opposition to the Teacher sent from God. It is rather the lingering, departing scruple of doubt—*how might this be possible?* He does not go so far as to make prominent his personal *I* of open confession and prayer—that would have been too hard for the ruler and scribe; he does not say—How can these things be to me? Tell me, and help me further! He does, however, give up that first proud *we*, and the sincere internal sentiment of his abstract and theoretical question is a concrete and practical prayer.

Every natural man is in a certain sense like this resisting and inconsistently acting man. In the case of all of us, even when we are entirely sincere, there comes forward the secret impression in the soul—which is graciously pardoned by the Lord, because

being what we are, it is natural and necessary to us—that something new, inexplicable and unheard of, is to take place upon it. The old *nature* asks like the old Sarah, who, half in the joy of faith that she will have a son, laughs at the strange and marvellous promise—*Shall I of a surety* (הַאַף אֲמְנָם) bear a child (or be *born again*), which am old! The mildest form of this encounter of doubt, in connection with perfect faith, is the virgin-language of the handmaid of the Lord, the word of Mary—How shall this be (πῶς ἔσται τοῦτο) seeing I know not a man?[1]

Nicodemus does not speak with such entire submission, and yet he submits. "I know not how this may come to pass, which Thou requirest of me, or rather dost promise to me;" in this confession he is altogether right. But *Thou knowest full well*, speak, Lord, Thy servant heareth—this is what his soul struggles to say. He has apprehended this much, that the ἄνωθεν γεννηθῆναι can be no δεύτερον εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν κοιλίαν τῆς μητρός, but must proceed ἐκ πνεύματος: he therefore says now, having caught the sense of our Lord's last exposition,—ταῦτα γενέσθαι. How can such things as these, with all their adjuncts, be accomplished—the Spirit moving upon, and speaking to us, our hearing and receiving, and then the distinctive being born again as the result?—Some have thought that Nicodemus is here once more confused and lost, knows not what to say, or how to answer, and therefore, not master of his own thoughts, simply repeats what he had objected before. But this *repetition*, in its significantly *varied* form, is not so incongruous and merely superficial as it might seem; it most aptly and expressly exhibits the internal feeling and posture of his mind. He now "lets alone the great matter of the new birth, which, though not understood, he yet accepts in faith; it is only about the how of its accomplishment that he seeks to be informed." (Luthardt.) Hence it is better to say, that he *now earnestly inquires* instead of opposing, that he is now intent upon hearing the voice of the Spirit, and that he from this moment does actually hear the great testimony concerning that Son of man, who, being the only-begotten Son of God, brings down and bestows life upon the world. From this moment *he says nothing more*, but has sunk into a disciple who

[1] "Nonnulli reprehendunt omnem quæstionem, quæ fit per *quomodo?* at Maria ipsa quæsivit: *quomodo?*" Beza.

has found his true teacher. *Therefore* the Saviour now graciously advances in His communications of truth: He once more solemnly, and in conclusion, brings to the mind of this master in Israel, now become a learner, his own not guiltless *ignorance*, in order that He may then proceed to utter out of the fulness of His Divine knowledge such further testimonies, both of earthly and heavenly things, as His docile scholar may to his own profit receive.

Ver. 10. Ταῦτα responds directly to the ταῦτα of Nicodemus' question, which is the last rejoinder of this closely-connected colloquy. *Thou knowest not these things* follows up, first of all, for his instruction the sincere confession to which he had now been finally brought, and which makes reparation for the οἴδαμεν of his first introduction. And thus it means—Dost thou admit that thou knowest not either the how or the what of that influence which the Spirit of God in us *can* and *must* exert, any more than whence the wind cometh or whither it goeth? And dost thou at length voluntarily declare—I know not! asking for thine instruction, without any further contradiction? But this recognition of his present modesty, approaching as it does a tone of *commendation*, is connected also with a gentle *reproof*, which is evident in the reference to his first confident entrance, and is expressed in the addition—Art thou the *master* in Israel, and knowest not these things? The article being prefixed obviously intimates—Thou who in this character, ὁ διδάσκαλος, didst come into My presence (Erasmus: ille magister), thou who as a wise διδάσκαλος didst confront the διδάσκαλος ἀπὸ θεοῦ with thy ready οἴδαμεν, as if thou wouldst represent, or couldst instruct, all thy fellows; thou who didst *then* oppose Me with thy πῶς δύναται of *contradiction*, which afterwards sank down into the πῶς δύναται of humble inquiry! We cannot fail to perceive a certain tinge of *irony* in this answer, though unmingled with the slightest bitterness of severity; it is a gracious and benignant correction, which by the emphatic *thou* (Σὺ εἶ) seizes and holds fast the already convicted spirit of the man. We may leave it questionable whether the διδάσκαλος contained any allusion to the title which Nicodemus had first given to the Lord, though the reciprocal and interwoven references of all the various expressions in this conversation render it highly probable. "Didst

thou desire at first, even while calling Me a teacher, to be *the* teacher of the two, abruptly correcting My verily! verily!—and hast thou now come to the consciousness of thine own ignorance, admitting Me to be the only teacher?"[1]

But there is, further, *not merely* a recalling of the dignity which had been *assumed*, but a recognition, also, of the *position* and *office* which Nicodemus really held.[2] Jesus terms Nicodemus τὸν διδάσκαλον "for the sake of *contrast*," as Winer well says; of contrast, that is, with Jesus Himself, and with his own ignorance; at the same time including the universal contrast in which the order of which Nicodemus is the representative stands with the Saviour. Schmieder also (in the Programm für Pforta on Gal. iii. 19, 20) rightly remarks, Hic a Jesu non Nicodemum solum, sed omne Pharisæorum et Ἀρχόντων genus spectari. It is not therefore simply urged against him as an objection, Thou camest as,—Thou wouldst have represented thyself,—and (in this sense) thou *wast*—but it makes the *admission*, thou *art*, and on that account his official designation stands in full—τοῦ Ἰσραήλ. Nicodemus, as an instructed minister among God's people, as one appointed to be a learned teacher of others, might have known and ought to have known something of these matters. *All* the masters in Israel like himself might and should—not, indeed, have understood and fully penetrated, for no man can do this, but—have known, in *another* signification of this word, that of which the Lord was now speaking; they should have had some knowledge of that which is the radical need of human nature—a change and new birth of man through the renewing power of the grace of God. The Lord now passes over to this other meaning of the word "know," in order to instil into the mind of Nicodemus the conviction that such entire ignorance

[1] "*Two* great doctors meet in this Gospel, the one from Jerusalem, the other from Heaven." Val. Herberger.

[2] But not, as Scholl and Baumgarten-Crusius derive from it, a reference to any special title (the חָכָם in the high council or the like) which Nicodemus might have borne in the Synagogue, the Sanhedrim, or among the people. This is as unfounded in itself, as it would be beneath the dignity of Jesus on this occasion. It is equally unnecessary to refer to any peculiar celebrity of Nicodemus' person in the current estimation of the people, to wit, ille doctor, cujus tam celebris est opinio—as Melanchthon is termed the doctor of Germany! Jno. vii. 52 scarcely accords with this.

in a man like himself must involve him in blame, since it could not but have proceeded from previous and censurable neglect. It is all well that thou hast not understood the *how*, and art brought to confess as much; but that thou shouldst have till this day known nothing of the *what*, as now appears from thy words, cometh of evil, and is thine own sore fault. The new birth is not only possible and a reality, but for you that are born of the flesh it is absolutely *necessary;* and that ye should all, *if ye know yourselves*, have well known, especially ye who are taught of God and teachers of the people! Thus the ταῦτα which the Lord gives back has a special and distinctive emphasis, as the Lutheran "das" aptly expresses it—this fundamental matter, this essential doctrine! For nothing comes home to us more closely than this; the knowledge that we are flesh sits as close to us as our flesh itself; to this γνῶθι σεαυτόν no theology or testimony of heavenly things is directly necessary; it is nothing more than a part of correct anthropology. He who has only in addition the knowledge of the law of God arrives at the position of Rom. vii. Even he who teaches another doctrine than ours must, when he gives instruction in mere natural *morality*, admit the conviction of radical evil, of the impotence of man, and the requirement of Divine help.

But here is a Master in *Israel*, the people fore-prepared through the law and the promise for the grace of the Spirit! It was only through severe conflict with God and man in sorrow and repentance that Jacob, who had sinfully and precipitately invaded the blessing, attained to his new name and his new nature: and this had been from the beginning typically presignified in the name *Israel*. But the master in this Israel knows nothing of the fundamental significance of Israel's call, and providential guidance, and destiny: the guide knows not the way himself! Did not the curse of the law point back at the very first to a before-promised blessing; did not the first word uttered upon Sinai appeal to an internal redemption already effected? Did not Moses at the close of the lawgiving indicate the end of the law, the *word which was nigh* to the mouth and to the heart, the word concerning the new creation through faith, the *true circumcision of the heart?* (Deut. xxx. 6–14, comp. Rom. x. 4–8, Jer. iv. 4.) Was not that itself the promise of the new

covenant, in which the *Spirit* was to come into man's heart? (Jer. xxxi. 33; Ezek. xi. 19, xviii. 31, xxxvi. 26, 27.) Was not the entire prophetic scripture pervaded by a perpetual reference to this great blessing, pointed to by a consecutive series of intimations which the veil of the letter could scarcely hide from the open eyes of willing hearts? Yea, the new *birth* had been already plainly spoken of; and not only for the Gentiles (Ps. lxxxvii. 4–6), for Ephraim also is rebuked, as an unwise son, for remaining so long in the mother's womb—see Hos. xiii. 13, according to the correct translation. All these passages, however, the plainer as well as the more obscure, were not understood by the masters in Israel of that time, because they understood not the scriptures in general, neither the law and to what end it was given, nor the promise and what it involved. *Israel* knew not the signification of that circumcision of which he boasted; just as now the baptized know not the meaning of their baptism. The guides and leaders of the people, the orthodox *Pharisees*, knew not the scriptures nor the power of God, any more than the unbelieving heretics: hence the oft-repeated protests—Have ye not read? How is it written—? What meaneth these—? If ye knew—! Go ye and learn—! And thus the word which the Lord now speaks to Nicodemus is no other than one of the accustomed proverbial expressions of the Scribes, used by them in their blind contentions,[1] and which the Lord gives back in its most significant and truest sense—Is your wisdom so foolish, that it has forgotten and overlooked that which is of fundamental importance? And is it possible that *because* ye are *masters*, and in knowing and teaching have unlearned the art of learning, that ye manifest such ignorance? So, indeed, alas, it was. In this also was Nicodemus the representative of all the teachers of Israel, in whose name he came before Jesus, and to this the article before διδάσκαλος points our attention.[2]

[1] See the Talmudical formula Midrasch Mischle 9, 2. Nedarim Fol. 49, 2; and especially what Lücke after Lightfoot and Wetstein quotes from the Echah rabbathi, Fol. 66, 2.

[2] According to Beza Christ had *elected* Nicodemus to this conversation (and drawn him to that end!)—ut ex iis quæ respondit Pharisæus, intelligerent discipuli, quam corruptus esset ecclesiæ judaicæ status, quam crassa ignorantia laborarent etiam in specie sapientissimi!

Oh that the school wisdom of the present day were less ignorant than it is upon this same fundamental doctrine! Oh that there were not so much necessity as there is for the Lord to repeat His cry—Art thou a preacher in the congregation of Christians, a Doctor and Professor of Theology, the trainer of future preachers, and knowest not *these things!* Of a truth every candidate for confirmation might know and should know more concerning them than the former masters of Israel. But if many of our present masters know them not, the ordinarii as well as the extraordinarii (to say nothing of the young licentiates), the ordainers as well as the ordained, it is not for us to depose and set them aside, any more than our Lord did in the case of either Nicodemus or Caiaphas; but we would especially impress upon the attention of all those true *Nicodemuses* who may be found in their ranks, what the Lord from heaven proceeded on this occasion to say.

Ver. 11. The *third* Ἀμὴν, ἀμὴν, λέγω σοι from the mouth of the true and faithful Witness; and this indicates the third instruction, the third great *answer* to the question which had now become a question indeed, proceeding from an humbled man. The first had been an anticipatory assertion to Nicodemus of a general kind on his first entrance; the second had confuted his objection by a direct explanation; *this third answer embraces all that follows to the close.* Until now the Lord had been speaking concerning the *Spirit* of God, of whom every man must be born in order to enter His kingdom, and of the absolute necessity of this new birth; but now the discourse proceeds to the *Son* of God, who, as the Son of man, brings the Spirit from heaven, and by a profoundly mysterious *lifting up*, procures the communication of that Spirit; and so, finally, the *Father* becomes the subject, whose spontaneous love to the world sent this life-giving and saving grace of regeneration among men. Up to this point, the need had been dwelt upon, now comes the satisfaction of that need; the Δεῖ had been insisted on against all πᾶς δύναται, and now the free offer of what this δύναται involves, is made to every one that believeth; but *intermediately*, and as a necessary *transition*, comes in a reference to the *Mediator* of such superabounding grace in the person of the *only-begotten*, who came down to fallen man's estate, and

under the necessity of another solemn Δεῖ was lifted up a sacrifice for us. The first part makes prominent the mystery of that new birth which is *necessary* to every man; in the second is pointed out the mystery of that *death* of the heavenly Son of man *upon the cross*, through which our full regeneration becomes *possible;* in the third, finally, the simple mystery of that *faith* in the crucified is openly declared, through which that regeneration is perfected in its actual effects in the light and life of God. Thus does the sacred discourse advance from that which is most difficult and obscure (which nevertheless appeals to our most direct need, and consequently seizes our inmost feeling, conscience, and consciousness) to that which is most easy and obvious; it descends from the rigorous exclusion and condemnation of *all flesh* to the gracious invitation and benediction of *all who believe.* It is in this view the proper *counterpart* of the Sermon on the Mount, which conversely proceeds from the general invitation of all the poor into the kingdom of heaven, to the description of the strait gate of regeneration, and severe threatening of judicial exclusion. The order of the Sermon is adapted to the mass of disciples, and indeed of all who are true hearers among the multitude of the people, inasmuch as the beginning of spiritual poverty may be presupposed in them, and there is no master-prejudice or darkness in them which requires to be previously cast down; but in the case of this ruler, the scanty portion of whose humble poverty of spirit, impelling him to come, was overlaid when *he had come* by the pride of his knowledge, it behoved that the severity should first be exhibited, and the awful closing of that door be announced, which should afterwards be graciously thrown open to his humility.

The Lord's purpose being now to speak of *His own person*, He immediately follows the *Verily* by *We*, which, however, approves itself by the entire context, and by its strict connection with λέγω σοι to refer solely to Himself. It had previously run—A man—ye—thou—every one. And as now the supply of the great need of humanity is to be pointed out, it is thought fit to sum up and confirm *once more* the testimony concerning this need, in order that the discourse may then rise from that which is already an earthly certain matter to the heavenly Son

of man in ver. 12. Ὃ οἴδαμεν λαλοῦμεν κ. τ. λ. holds good first of all concerning that which had been spoken and testified *by Jesus* in the previous part of this discourse concerning the new birth.

Whom could He then design to associate with Himself in this plural of the first person? Luther did not shrink from explaining it—I with John the Baptist and all My prophets, the Hirschberger Bibel—We, the sent of God, among whom thou numberest Me, especially the Baptist, inasmuch as he also announced the new birth through baptism as a part of God's counsel. So also most modern expositors; even von Gerlach has it—John the Baptist and I! Certainly the Lord had referred to his testimony in Israel by the expression "water" in ver. 5, and *might* therefore have appropriately said—Ye receive not *our* testimony, ye do not submit either to the typical and preparatory water of the forerunner, or the self-evidencing and mighty spirit of Him for whom John only prepared the way. This reproof would then be only the more explicit declaration of that which had been before hinted at; for Nicodemus was there implicitly reproached in some sense with not receiving the testimony of John. But this exposition loses all its speciousness and likelihood when we examine the passage more narrowly; it will appear unimaginable that the Lord from heaven should include Himself with His own messengers in one common *we*, and more especially in opposition to others! We have already intimated our conviction (upon Mark ix. 40, Vol. iii.) that our Lord never did, and never could, use this *we* in external relations. Such a conjunction of Himself with an earthly man, as here it is asserted with John the Baptist, would be without parallel in all the discourses of Jesus; indeed, it is absolutely impossible to accept it if we solemnly ponder the first clause of the sentence which follows. Did John speak that which he *had known*, in the sense in which the Lord did; that is, did John *testify* that which *he had seen?* He spoke indeed with the expectation of faith concerning *Him who was to come*, just as all the prophets of the Old Testament, to whom he yet belonged, had done; he prophesied, indeed, of Him whom he had not yet seen and known, till he *saw* the Spirit descend, and was then enabled, strictly speaking, to *bear witness*, John i. 31–34. The

emphasis of the words which our Lord here uses leads us to a knowledge *from higher experience*, and it is assumed as an axiom that by experience alone can anything generally be truly known, taught, and testified.[1] But that experience which is *here* concerned, is the perfect and distinct experience which the Spirit gives, and which, before Jesus came, no man had ever received in its fulness; that *seeing* of the kingdom of God which, according to ver. 3, is in our case one and the same with entering into it. *Hence* arose the obscurity of all earlier testimonies concerning the new birth in comparison with this present witness. Is not the least in the kingdom of heaven, who *seeth* in it that which all the prophets and righteous men did not see, greater than John, that greatest prophet who stood at its threshold? It is altogether out of harmony with all this that John should be represented as speaking and testifying what he saw and knew, even as the Lord Himself did. Neither are the words of John himself, as they are recorded by the Evangelist in the same chapter, in keeping with such a notion; his saying, perfectly in accordance as it is in other respects with the Lord's, must be taken as an appendage and explanatory supplement. There we find John declaring expressly what is written in ver. 27. The things of which the Lord says here ἑωράκαμεν, are indeed *first of all* the ἐπίγεια already testified; but these must be regarded partly (as will be shown hereafter) as connected already with the ἐπουρανίοις, and not to be apprehended by any mere earthly experience; and, further, the whole sentence refers already by anticipation to the heavenly things which He ὢν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ seeth and hath seen, ver. 13. It is impossible for any man with unbiassed mind to deny this connection of ver. 13 with ver. 11. The Baptist again declares expressly that which we read in vers. 31, 32; and hence Lücke (with whom Brückner agrees)

[1] Which Baumgarten-Crusius by a strange refinement so applies as to reject altogether the reference of οἴδαμεν and ἑωράκαμεν to Christ; since Christ in other passages is said to have seen only the ἐπουράνια, while here the ἐπίγεια are spoken of. He apprehends this last correctly in part, and sees that it is Christ who speaks in λαλοῦμεν and μαρτυροῦμεν; but he introduces a complication in the passage of two subjects—that which man (men generally) know and can see I teach—in common with all who proclaim the Divine kingdom! This is a view of the passage which this generally keen expositor may well be left to maintain alone.

thinks it much more natural to take the plural as rhetorically (?) used for the singular, as perhaps (merely perhaps ?) Christ, ver. 32, in opposition to the Baptist, indeed, in another (?) relation, is characterised as one who preeminently testifies of heavenly things, *what He hath seen and heard.* Yes verily, there must ever be an express distinction between the mere *speaking* (teaching) of all earthly men, albeit in a relative sense we may and must speak of the *testimony* of the prophets sent of God, and that most essential *witness* of the only One who speaketh of Divine and human things from that immediate sight and knowledge of them which was eternally natural to Him. *This* μαρτυρεῖν, which the Lord *here* arrogates to Himself, is manifestly the same with His Ἀμήν, ἀμήν, λέγω σοι, to which the נֶאֱמָן יְהוָה of all the Prophets never attained. But he who receiveth this one witness—the Baptist further says—setteth his seal to it that *God* is true: for He whom God hath sent (in this preeminent sense) *speaketh the words of God* (immediately and as no other can) vers. 33, 34. Thus we may presume that the inclusion of John in the reference of the words of Jesus is refuted by John himself. But still less could the ancient prophets be included, for though they from afar pointed *prophetically* to the regeneration, they never could have borne witness to it as being in the fullest sense a matter of experience to themselves.

The most *universal* acceptation of the *we*, as merely viewed in its connection, would manifestly require, however,—*We that are born of the Spirit.* Accordingly we who are believers in Christ may *now*, inasmuch as *Christ is in us*, meekly adopt the same words, and proclaim this *we* in opposition to the world without; but *at the time when they were spoken* there were none who had yet believed unto the new birth, none who were altogether born of the Spirit save Jesus only.[1] Further, let

[1] Wesley's comment—I and all that believe in Me—is premature, if meant for exegesis and not for a merely practical and edifying application. Similarly Lange is more poetical than expository when he says—"a whole world of *future* believers in His breast!" But Sepp's is the most marvellous perversion, who says in his so-called scientific criticism of the Gospels, that John mingles here his own reflection with the sayings of Christ, using the *we* concerning himself and all believers! (Leben Christi vii. 253.)

all that preceded and all that followed be considered, in which the Lord continually utters His own personal and independent testimony—I have told you, I tell you, ver. 12; no man but He that came down, the Son of man, ver. 13. Let chap. i. 18 be also compared with chap. vi. 46, v. 40. Ὃ οἴδαμεν λαλοῦμεν, καὶ ὃ ἑωράκαμεν μαρτυροῦμεν—what an announcement and superscription is this for all the future discourses of Jesus!!

But why then, if He only speaks of Himself, does He yet speak in the plural? Lücke's mere "rhetorical" cannot certainly satisfy us—as St Paul often uses the plural in speaking of himself. We think that it may be partly explained by considering that He alone, until this time, represents *the one part or class of humanity* in His own person; that He is the only one who liveth in the Spirit, who said, ver. 7, to all others, Δεῖ ὑμᾶς, which *you* in vers. 11, 12 is again used in contradistinction. But it must also be remembered that *His* "οἴδαμεν" (and this is its specific emphasis!) is directly opposed, and in the same terms, to the "οἴδαμεν" of Nicodemus, ver. 2. How could *this* have been overlooked in a discourse which is full of simple antagonist sayings! The Lord does not speak rhetorically, but He does speak *proverbially*, as if He had said—I also will utter My "we know"—and with a propriety very different from yours! Thus there is in it some tinge of *irony* against all, whether of that day or this, whom Nicodemus represents.[1] His word runs—Thou art the teacher, and with all thy profession of "we know," knowest thou not *these things?* Verily, I say unto *thee*—*We* are the true teacher, as thou hast used the word without knowing its real significance; Mine is the true *we*, and thine must retire before it; ye "know" and ye "speak" much, which ye have nevertheless never *seen* (chap. v. 37, 38; Col. ii. 18), and just on that account your knowledge is unsound. *We*, however, *profess not merely* "to speak of something which we know" (this is the meaning of the former sentence in its μείωσις)—but there is a superadded ear-

[1] For among us also there are many masters who speak for long hours of things which they do not know, and testify of things which they have never seen. (So Zeller in the Beugg. Monatsbl.)

nestness, and the foundation of this is shown, there is an Ἀμήν in the λέγω σοι—We testify, that which we have seen; and My Ἀμήν, which involves a *We* which brings every other into subjection, can never be repelled in any such way as thou thoughtest at first—ver. 4. This sacred and supreme *authority* our Lord asserts for *His own word*, against all who proclaim their *knowledge*, while He uses their own formula in holy irony; and would that we could fasten it with nails upon the hearts and consciences of all the Nicodemuses among them, so that it should pierce them as oft as they fall into their vain reasonings and proud assertions. But this can only be done by the *Spirit* for them who hear *Him*. And this reflection leads us finally to an *under-meaning* of the We, which is perfectly natural, and by no means to be peremptorily rejected; a meaning which of course could not be immediately obvious to Nicodemus, but which yields itself to subsequent reflection; and that is (with Bengel) —I and the Spirit![1] This harmonizes well with what had preceded—Thou hearest (even now) the voice of the Spirit—it is indeed an explanation of it. The apostles said—We are His witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost! (Acts v. 32.) The Lord Himself, moreover, speaks similarly of His own, and the Father's, testimony, Jno. v. 32–37, viii. 17, 18. In the latter passage, particularly, "I and the Father" is almost parallel with "I and the Spirit;" save that here this is condensed into the We, just as in Jno. xiv. 23 we find such a We actually used concerning the Father and the Son. In this discourse to Nicodemus, which may be classed among the most profound and pregnant of all the discourses of Jesus, and which is, moreover, arranged, as we have remarked, according to the three hypostases, we may safely recognise an intimation of the personality of the Holy Ghost. But this lies only in the mystical background; we may by no means put a stumbling-block in the way of the learned by superficially and mechanically interpret-

[1] Dräseke ventures to maintain that not only Jesus might, but *must* in this saying have had the *Father* in His thought, who testified for Him; and the *Spirit*, who should testify of Him. More rightly this last should be—who bare witness in Him. We cannot understand the *seeing* concerning the *Father;* but concerning the *Spirit*, comp. Jno. xvi. 13.

ing—We, that is, the whole Trinity; We, which we are one in Me![1]

And *ye receive not* Our witness! This present tense rejects any reference besides the time immediately present. The Lord strengthens the mighty emphasis of His testimony by this *complaint*.[2] This charge is the never-ending compassionate *lamentation* of eternal Truth itself, that the Lie will not acknowledge its truth; the *sorrow* of the living Spirit, because the dead and the deaf hear His voice, and yet will not hear it; the *supplication* of the Only-begotten, who has descended among sinners, that they will not turn away their ears from His Divine-human words to their eternal destruction! And *ye*[3]—thus does the Lord place Nicodemus once more, after He had singled him out with a most distinctive Thou, in ver. 10, in the fellowship of his contemporaries; for even his question in ver. 9 was far from being a full *reception* of the *witness*. Let it not appear strange to us that the Lord should seem in any degree to repel him who had now come near, and require yet more from him who was now so much humbled; it is with the utmost graciousness that He does this, in order to win him over entirely, and His countenance and tone of voice could not have been repulsive. We might even presume that here, as well as before and after vers. 10 and 12, a *question* is to be understood—And can it be that ye receive not even yet Our witness? The meaning of the words is assuredly that of a question; it is, as it were, a request urged upon one who stood procrastinating at the door—enter in! Why standest thou without? Receive My testimony! Else can I say no more,—and shall I not then pass on from the earthly to the heavenly things? Wilt thou, indeed, not believe?[4] It is evident that ver. 12, under the guise of repulsion,

[1] As nevertheless Alford, entirely misconceiving it, quotes my opinion.

[2] Sepp perceives here a most evident anticipation of his own reflecting displeasure, which *the Evangelist* in his old age with "almost feminine lamentation" may have interwoven with the words of Jesus! We say again—And will such a critic charge the Protestants with their trespasses?

[3] Which does not (according to Olshausen) intimate that the discourse suddenly passes over to others who were present—probably his companions!

[4] *In so far* the subsequent words of the Baptist are not quite parallel, though their phraseology is the same, when he sets over against the hyper-

has this encouraging and attracting sense; for the Lord, in ver. 13, actually begins to speak of heavenly things, and thus manifestly presumes upon faith in the hearer.

Ver. 12. *Believe!* This new and great word, which now takes the place of "know," was prepared for by the middle-term "reception of the witness," and in part explained by it also, though the perfection of faith embraces much more than this beginning.[1] And is it not in the highest and only sense *rational* to receive the witness of One who speaketh that which He knoweth, and testifieth that which He hath seen, because He is come from God, as we ourselves are constrained to "know" and acknowledge by the evidence of His works; to receive the witness of such a Son of man, who places Himself in opposition to all other men with equal graciousness and dignity, speaking to us words of the Spirit in which we hear a new voice speaking to our inmost being, confirming and fulfilling all former anticipation, knowledge, or testimony among men; to admit and appreciate the *witness of Jesus* concerning the salvation provided of God for our fallen human nature, and *to listen as disciples to this great Teacher*—no longer basely repelling His patiently reiterated Ἀμήν, Ἀμήν by our infatuated *πῶς δύναται*? Is not such faith a becoming acceptance and appropriation of the gift of God, while all unbelieving contradiction is mere unreasonableness, and all falling back upon our own *οἴδαμεν, τοῦτ' ἔστι οὐκ οἴδαμεν, οὐ γινώσκομεν* a lie, or a wilful bankruptcy of our understanding? Alas, that it were only the detriment of the understanding, and not, as it is, the condemnation and ruin of the whole man!

The Lord goes on to speak further upon that unbelief in regard to things obvious and close at hand, by means of which the poor, complacent men, who trusted in their knowledge, barred themselves from the perception of "higher truth;" and

bole—All men come to Him (ver. 26)—the lamentation of his zealous sorrow—And no man receiveth His testimony! ver. 32.

[1] Hence it is at least inexact, even altogether incorrect, to hold with B. Jacobi (Stud. u. Krit. 1835, 1) that "the *πιστεῦσαι* is a *λαβεῖν τὴν μαρτυρίαν*." Let it be observed how the Lord immediately goes on from this first stage of the meaning, to that of which it is the condition, but contains much more than it—*πιστεύειν εἰς αὐτόν*, ver. 15.

in doing so, He now distinguishes between the ἐπίγεια and the ἐπουράνια. He does not say indefinitely—according to Luther's translation—about earthly and about heavenly things: but He declares that He will *speak*, that is, give utterance to, testify, teach *the* heavenly things, just as He had already spoken *the* earthly things. In both cases, therefore, the things which are signified by this τὰ must be distinct in their several connection; as well afterwards as before. It is not γήϊνα or γήϊα, as Origen remarked, but ἐπίγεια, ἃ τοῖς ἐπὶ γῆς ἔτι διατρίβουσιν ἀνθρώποις δυνατὰ ὑπάρξαι τε καὶ νοηθῆναι. Of what has the Lord, then, been speaking, concerning which He says εἶπον? Of the *new birth* of the Spirit, and thence immediately of the Holy Ghost and His wonderful influence. And does this belong to earthly things? The doubt concerning this has led many to refer the words *only* to the *parabolical manner* of speaking about it,[1] to the *similitudes* of birth and of the wind;—an interpretation which is by no means conformable to the full discourse. For the earthly things themselves are spoken just as the heavenly are. Jesus does not speak indeed of eating and drinking, of gold and wealth, of politics and commerce; His discourse refers not to *such* "earthly things," but to *the earthly in and amid* the *heavenly*. And is not the *new birth* something earthly in a relative sense, inasmuch as it immediately concerns man upon earth, is an experience which he must pass through in this his lower state, and the intelligence respecting it near and intelligible to him through the urgent and continual impulse of his need? In this we discern a sublime paradox, that the Lord now describes as an ἐπίγειον, and places among the initial lessons of His doctrine, that which had been *before* He came the ultimate, high, and dimly seen end of all scriptural testimonies.[2] For now He is

[1] Chrysostom quoted by Klee:—τὰ δὲ ἐπίγεια ἐνταῦθα τινὲς μὲν περὶ τοῦ ἀνέμου φασίν εἰρῆσθαι, τοῦτ' ἔστιν· εἰ καὶ ὑπόδειγμα ἀπὸ τῶν ἐπιγείων ἔδωκα.

[2] Not, as Hegel thought, that the ἐπίγεια were the doctrines well known in the Jewish religion, which had already come down, as it were, from heaven to earth; while the ἐπουράνια are such as Jesus brought with Him from heaven direct! Nor, with Lange, that the former were the truths already upon earth, naturalized (?) in the Jewish community. For we see very plainly that the ἄνωθεν γεννηθῆναι in its simple expression is something which the Saviour has brought new from heaven.

come, the Son of man from heaven, the First-born of the Spirit in human nature; and the Spirit now speaks as He had not spoken before,—more penetratingly, with ampler revelation; more convincingly, with more abundant promise and gift. The new birth is, indeed, at the same time, an ἐπουράνιον (as Origen further remarks, see in Klee) inasmuch as it came from heaven as the gift of God to man: but the thing itself, and the doctrine respecting it, constitute but the first step of the ladder of heaven, which evermore stretches higher and higher towards heavenly things. The act itself takes place in margine cœli, as the beginning and foundation of religion upon earth; the doctrine concerning it seizes our conscience as a first and elementary truth, has its similitude in our former birth according to the flesh, in the motion of the wind and the living breath of all physical nature. This is the true sense of what was before quoted; in connection with which we have only further to remark that according to the Lord's word there is a πιστεύειν required even for the ἐπίγεια. Is it not by a certain faith that I apprehend my own physical birth, and my own living and breathing afterwards? Is not everything in the region of the lowest and most common, strictly speaking earthly, experience, based ultimately upon the reception of a testimony concerning things in their πόθεν and ποῦ utterly inexplicable? As thus the earthly here points to the heavenly, the most natural thing to God's highest wonders in creation; so again the first thing in heavenly doctrine and gift by the analogy of *similitude* as well as because responding to our *urgent need*, sinks down to us as a true ἐπίγειον.

The Lord appears, in His conclusion a minori ad majus, to have Wisd. ix. 16 in view, where τὰ ἐπὶ γῆς and τὰ δὲ ἐν οὐρανοῖς are just in the same way opposed to each other: but here the application of a statement which has its obvious and humbling meaning for every sincere inquirer in all cases, has a much deeper sense; it here contains nothing humbling or repelling, but contains an earnest solicitation to that *faith*, to which are *then* promised further heavenly communications. For conversely he who has received and experienced the first will be further willing and able to advance, ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν, to higher things. The *heavenly things* have here, accord-

ing to the deep and ample comprehension of the expression, a very wide and very various signification: first of all, referring to that which Nicodemus expected on his first coming, but further and preeminently, to that which the Lord, in a manner far beyond his anticipation, has to say to him and will say. The question πῶς πιστεύσετε; points certainly to *such* communications, premature and therefore impossible, as the blind presumption of the confident scribes would desire to receive; in entire ignorance that a man can know nothing until he has learned to believe, and that much even then is for ever beyond his faith. Can the Lord give us to see those mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, or of heaven itself, which He hath *seen* and *heard*[1] in the bosom of the Father, before we have entered in through the right gate of regeneration, and thus through faith have obtained with our new life a new eye to receive its light? Even then, is it possible for us to apprehend anything heavenly in human thought and human words, otherwise than in the similitude of the earthly things? Are there not still remaining things ἄῤῥητα, for which the language which is limited to earth has no terms, and which *could* only be uttered in linguâ angelorum? This is the ultimate reference of the far-reaching word of Jesus in this sharp contrast; not that He means, however, at first, the things ἄῤῥητα (concerning which Himself, and the whole scripture, is silent); but as the Son of man speaking to the children of men He puts the possible case ἐὰν εἴπω ὑμῖν; the ἐὰν being as much within the bounds of actual possibility as the εἰ had been just before. It is not therefore involved that "He was not disposed to communicate the Divine doctrine;" —for He immediately makes a transition through the καί of the following verse, in which *heaven* is thrice mentioned, to the utterance of the heavenly things.[2] In order to the perfect

[1] In connection with which Voss (Satanologie, Rudalb. and Guerike Zeitsch. 1851, 4 S. 711), refers to things such as are mentioned in Lu. x. 18: but he was thus constrained to maintain that among the ἐπουράνια was to be placed the vanquishing of the devil. Something like this has been discerned as the most hidden intimation of ver. 14 below, but there the *heavenly* Son of man is the only subject.

[2] Luther also: "Here He begins to speak of high heavenly matters." Lampe: illa regni cœlorum mysteria, quæ Jesus in sequentibus proponere volebat, de cœlesti sua origine, etc.

witness concerning the new-birth, such a witness as should attain the Saviour's aim, there was necessary the further testimony concerning *His heavenly person*, through which alone that gift comes unto us. Hence He is constrained to unfold this again in ch. vi. 51–62 to the contradicting and contentious people; just as now, in order to win Nicodemus, He passed over to the same doctrine.

Jesus, in His twofold nature as the Son of man and the Son of God, *knows* and *has seen* both the earthly and the heavenly things, whether as they follow one another here, or as they both already coincide in the doctrine which He now first brings down from heaven to earth; and thus knowing them by His own true discernment and experience, He can and will *speak* concerning them. What remains for man when He begins and goes on thus to testify? *Believe!* Receive His testimony! first of all His testimony concerning the flesh and its corruption, which indeed scarcely needs "faith" in the slightest sense; then the promise of that possible renewal; and then with faith most properly so called (εἰς αὐτόν, ver. 15), the word concerning Him, through whom this renewal comes. And this progressive faith must ever be the condition of all true, practical, and theoretical knowledge of the kingdom of God, and man's entrance into it. He to whom it is not yet a matter of faith that having been born of the flesh he must and may be born of the Spirit, will be unable to acknowledge and receive Jesus as come from heaven to that end; and, again, he alone who believes Jesus on the assurance of His own word and testimony, will yield himself to be brought to regeneration. For both pass reciprocally one into the other, and are strictly united in fact, as they are in this discourse to Nicodemus.[1] The German translation, which gives it—How *would* ye believe, if I did tell you? does not strictly correspond with our Lord's meaning: it rather misplaces the sense, since the Lord only intends to say—*Wilt* thou then believe Me yet further? thou givest Me but slight encouragment to proceed,

[2] Dräseke says very beautifully, "he who will not *believe* it, let him *experience* it!" and then adds immediately, "But what do I say? *will* not believe it? and nevertheless *experience* it? No, that cannot be. I must retract. If thou hast not a will to believe, the capacity to experience is also of necessity wanting to thee!"

and yet (ver. 13), I will and I must forthwith utter to thee an ἐπουράνιον! This is the mystery of the heavenly origin, dignity, and authority of the Son of man proposed to faith, with the continuation of the wondrous *redemption* accomplished by Him upon the Cross. Without faith in this there is no regeneration!

Ver. 13. The declaration to be believed embraces vers. 13–15. The new birth which is necessary for all men upon earth, and which is possible through the Spirit from heaven, becomes actual only through faith in the Son of man, who unites heaven and earth, who came from heaven, is in heaven, and goes back to heaven again;—a faith which obtains a new life for him who possesses it. The ζωὴ αἰώνιος is here at the commencement emphatically "the new life of God in humanity." The ascending up into heaven, of which this verse speaks, is obviously a general expression for the fetching or bringing down from above: no man, independently of Christ, can obtain and appropriate to himself this Spirit and this life. The first preliminary *knowledge* of Divine things, as man's folly without communion with the life and spirit of God labours after it, must be wrested from heaven with such Promethean or Titanic efforts: see the passage in Bar. iii. 29–31, which refers to Job xxviii. and Deut. xxx. at once. But this apocryphal illustration of holy sayings is superficial in comparison of the marvellous word of Solomon's prophetic wisdom, which accords precisely with our text, and in which the Proverbs unite with the Psalms in heralding *the Son*:—we mean Prov. xxx. 4. Though in this passage reference seems only to be made to the bringing down of the knowledge חָכְמָה וְדַעַת קְדוֹשִׁים mentioned in ver. 3, yet the prophetic word points to the condition as well as to the consequence of this knowledge, the possession of a new living power: Who taketh the *wind* in his hands? Who bindeth the *water* in a garment? We are convinced, indeed, that the strictest connection subsists between this word of Solomon and our Lord's discourse to Nicodemus: the γραφὴ had laid down the former as προϊδοῦσα, that the Lord might now make His appeal to it. We can scarcely call it an allusion, it is rather almost an interpretative *quotation*, when He speaks here to the Scribe of a *Son* of man, and (afterwards, ver. 16), of a *Son of God*, who thus bringeth down the *Spirit* and

the *water* of regeneration. The Spirit in Solomon signified, indeed, by the רוּחַ the true wind or spirit of life, which none else can gather into his hand and power (Prov. xxvii. 16), into his חָפְנַיִם that he may thence distribute it; and by the *water* which should be bound into a *garment* (Isa. xl. 12) He signified no other than that above-mentioned essential water of the regeneration which is the covering of our inward nakedness. The mysterious and sublime question which is then asked—What is *His Son's* name? is incontestably the only passage in the Old Testament where we read, without any point of connection with mortal type, of an equal eternal and almighty Son of God, who establisheth the ends of the earth: Ps. ii. 12, with its absolute בַּר and the אַשְׁרֵי כָל־חוֹסֵי בוֹ which becomes God alone, is the only other near approach to it. To this most solemn saying, which in its original place also casts down the presumption of ignorance by uttering the mystery of all mysteries,[1] the Lord undoubtedly refers the Scribe, according to the connection of His whole discourse concerning the water, the wind, and the Spirit; and this the Scribe would most probably perceive.

None of all the saints had hitherto possessed this knowledge, this life, as the Son now bringeth them both in one! Οὐδεὶς ἀναβέβηκεν εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, that is, no man, no mortal; for the discourse is now of men: the angels had ascended and descended upon and in the service of the Son of man from the time of Bethel, and from the beginning upon the children of men, Jno. i. 51. Ἀναβέβηκεν stands thus indeed *aoristically*, since from the fact declared that no man *had* ascended,[2] it might be assumed that no man ever *can* or *will* by his own power. Besides which that *other* passage of Scripture may be compared, which the Lord at the same time refers to and explains—מִי יַעֲלֶה־לָּנוּ הַשָּׁמַיְמָה Deut. xxx. 12 (Rom. x. 6–8 interpreted of Christ). But on that very account, because this aorist passes out of the preterite into the future, and because the following sentence by its εἰ μή asserts that of the heavenly Son of man which the former by its

[1] Compare the exposition in "Die Politik der Weisheit," which I have since published. Barmen, 1850.

[2] Thus not even Moses, as the Jewish fable on Deut. xxx. 12 (then probably already extant) says.

οὐδείς had denied of all mortals besides,[1] an unbiassed and penetrating critic like Lücke should have hesitated to say that "the *perfect* tense and the entire connection makes it *impossible* that we should join with the old expositors in referring this to the ascension of Jesus after His resurrection!" We can still less understand how Olshausen also, and Tholuck, could reject that interpretation: for if the second member of the sentence does say that the *Son of man* is no such mere son of man as others are, who should need to go up first and yet could not, but as one who, having descended, yet remained ever in heaven,—it was in close connection with this that He who had come down should go back again where He was before. Let us take ch. vi. 62 (where again the πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν, ver. 63, is the immediate fruit of His ascension), in conjunction with this saying, and we shall observe how remarkably the Gospel of St John, while it does not historically record the Lord's ascension, yet has noted down the prophetic testimonies of it which fell from His lips. Further, in what but this consists the connection of the ὑψωθῆναι of ver. 14 with these preceding words, that it indicates the marvellous way of His ascension through the death of the cross by the emphatic οὕτως? Thus the second Adam, bearing human nature in Himself, representing and renewing it in His own person; the Son of man (see ch. i. 51 earlier, and all that we have before remarked upon this expression) testifies to Himself as one καταβὰς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἐρχόμενος in the highest sense), concerning whom alone may be said with perfect truth and in no "seeming" sense, what Socinus here maintains according to his own view—qualis descensus, talis etiam ascensus. This *personal* Son of man, in whom the ἀναβέβηκεν must be fulfilled as certainly as the καταβάς, is something very different from that abstract and general idea which Ebrard finds in our text—"thus it is only the mind which is derived from heaven, and is therefore heavenly, that is, capable of ascending to heaven!"

The majestic ὁ ὢν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ is, finally, of deep significance; attributed as it is by our Lord to His whole life in the flesh

[1] Rightly of all, in the meaning which it here has. For what befell Enoch and Elijah was not the ἀνάβασις of a Son of man, out of his own, and at the same time God's power, but an ἀνάληψις.

between the καταβαίνειν and ἀναβαίνειν. Can we regard, with Bengel, who quotes ch. ix. 25, xix. 38; Luke xxiv. 44; 2 Cor. viii. 9, this ὁ ὤν merely as standing for ὃς ἦν? We should not regard it, in that case, as involving what some have termed an idle and inexplicable tautology; but the ὅπου ἦν τὸ πρότερον would, as in ch. vi. 62, receive from it an additional emphasis, the ascending which was to all others impossible being to *Him* only a natural return to his home. A deeper feeling of the emphasis, however, leads us to recognise, with many other expositors, an actual ὤν in this place; the last sentence seems thus to elevate the meaning to a climax, and further, the idea which it involves of a *heavenly man* (1 Cor. xv. 47–50), one who unites in His own twofold nature into one person God and man, and thus makes up the otherwise insuperable breach, is perfectly suitable to the profound connection of the whole discourse. Whether the indication of this central thought in the passage, according to which the outgoing of the ζωὴ αἰώνιος from the person of the heavenly Son of man, vers. 15, 16, would be explained just as in ch. v. 25, 26, is a mere "perplexing assertion," as Hofmann (Schriftbeweis i. 116) thinks, we leave to the reader's calm consideration.[1] Upon ch. i. 18, also, even Winer does not hesitate to translate ὤν as a continuous present; there as here this alone gives the true foundation of the discourse. God brings heaven with Him wherever He comes: the essential Son of God equally so; He remains in heaven "even in His condition of humiliation, through heavenly society (ch. i. 51), and inward communion with the Father." Such a constant continuance is very much more than that Socinian raptus in cœlos, which the ἀναβέβηκεν has been made to signify! This Son of man is not only in the kingdom of heaven, but He is already of His own being in heaven itself! If now through Him our conversation may be said to be also in heaven, what must have been the full meaning of this word in relation to Him whose fellowship with the Father was never suspended!

[1] Although Luthardt repeats the same protest after Hofmann. What we mean is critically intimated in Nonnus—εἰ μὴ θέσκελος οὗτος, ὃς ἀθανάτην ἓο μορφὴν οὐρανόθεν κατέβαινεν ἀήθεα σαρκὶ συνάπτων ἀνθρώπου μόνος υἱὸς, ὃς ἀστερόεντι μελάθρῳ πάτριον οὖδας ἔχων, αἰώνιος αἰθέρα ναίει.

Yet we must be on our guard, on the other hand, against making this expression a reason for denying, or even qualifying the κένωσις and κρύψις by which the Lord was really ἐν σαρκί, and that consummate glorification which first awaited Him at His ascension. The grasping at once all these wonderful antitheses in the person of Christ is the deep problem of our intellect, a problem which cannot be solved below by the profoundest theosophy, least of all by the human philosophising theology. While we are permitted humbly to investigate this mystery, let us never forget or weaken the force of that πιστεύειν εἰς αὐτόν of which alone the Lord now goes on to speak. To *believe* is to accept Him who has come down, so that He may enter into us; to hang upon Him, to yield ourselves up to be drawn and to be filled by Him, to become one with Him, as He is one with the Father. Though *no man* of himself has ever like Him gone up to heaven, yet all who are His through faith shall with Him, and after Him, enter into the kingdom of heaven, into heaven itself.

Pause, ye fourth-part, half, and three-fourths orthodox of the present age, before this first public and complete testimony of Jesus concerning His own person, in order that everything lacking may be added to your faith—fall down before Him and worship! And observe attentively how, and for what reason, He thus testifies of Himself, not for His own sake but for ours; only declaring to us the ἐπουράνιον in order that the ἐπίγειον of the new-birth might become possible to us. He who ὢν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ and at the same time truly ὢν ἐν σαρκί, as One who had come into our flesh, a son of man and thus a Son of God become of this earth, in whose person, consequently, *all* ἐπουράνια become ἐπιγεία *for us*;—this Jesus, who here speaks, possesses indeed the Spirit in the profoundest ἄδυτον of His Godhead as it regards Himself, but *for us* He must Himself first *obtain* that Spirit, that is, by the glorification and spiritualisation of *His* flesh make the Spirit *communicable* for all flesh. This takes place through His own *new birth in the death of the Cross* (as we are constrained by analogy, ἐν ὁμοιώματι to speak); it is there that He makes first the full descent to us, *thus* experiencing a glorification in which we may be lifted up together with Him. "The Son of man who was in heaven, passed into the

heavens according to the Divinity of His nature, but the earthly Son of man *must* even, as Moses had pretypified in the serpent, be *thus* lifted up." Thus, and not otherwise, do the man of flesh and the man of Spirit, which have been in contradistinction from ver. 6 downwards, perfectly coincide. The Spirit of God in the humanity of Jesus killed and made alive, and thus new-born, becomes a water (or matter, tincture) of life, which may proceed from Him to us. Let it be observed how this brings out by anticipation the profound meaning of the οὕτως in the following verse, a meaning which indicates the essential correspondence between the type and the antitype, the *real* reference in the figure of the serpent to the person of Christ.[1]

Vers. 14, 15. To this place belong the beautiful words of Kahnis: "The Holy Spirit is the substance of the new kingdom. But, while Christ lives upon earth, He is not fully poured out. He is only present in Christ. Christ is the life. Therefore Christ must die, in order that the principle of life, released from His person, to which it is attached, may develop its energies around. The dialectics of Jesus in His conversation with Nicodemus, are the dialectics of the whole gospel. Jesus resolves the kingdom of God, the essential matter of His doctrine, into Spirit and life, but the condition of this, again, is faith in His person, who is the life: and thus *the gravitating point of the Gospel is the person of Christ.* With equal correctness, Baumgarten-Crusius says that from this point the discourse proceeds unbroken in its reference to that for which ver. 13 had paved the way, the *person* of Christ; His *work* having previously been the subject. We would add to this that hitherto the transition had been from the person of the man needing regeneration and coming to Jesus, to the matter of regeneration itself; and this again leads back the discourse to the person of that Son of man, through whom regeneration comes to us. Yet more explicitly: the discourse now begins to deal with the *central mystery* of the kingdom of God, the being who, between heaven and earth, earthly-heavenly, mediates between both, that

[1] Compare, if you have the means, what we said four and twenty years ago, in the Andeutungen für glaüb. Schriftverst ii. S. 72–77; concerning the conversation with Nicodemus.

is, with *redemption through the death of Christ.* But *of this* the Lord cannot and will not speak expressly and openly, for many reasons which are generally given; if the disciples could not at the close bear to hear of His death, and could not conceive in their hearts the idea of the cross when He spake a word concerning it, how could He now suppose Nicodemus capable so early of understanding it? Yet He does not leave Nicodemus without an intimation which is given to him, as being a Scribe, and in order to assist his comprehension through the medium of Scripture. We have found a reference before to Deut. xxx. 12 and Prov. xxx. 4, as two most clear and undoubted explanatory passages; but now, on the other hand, the Lord refers to one of the most obscure of the types; one, however, which Moses in the most remarkable and striking manner exhibited to the people of Israel.[1] That Moses, in whose writings the Pharisees and Scribes found so much which they understood not, prophetically pretypified in this act something of high import; and the Lord by His interpretation gives us one more assurance that there is a systematic typology which has a sure foundation. For this καθώς, like the ὥσπερ of Matt. xii. 40, and all similar words in the mouth of the Lord or His Apostles, does not indicate a mere capricious *resemblance* or comparison, but furnishes an actual interpretation and solution of Scripture. We pause not to prove this over again here, but only throw it out by way of anticipation as the foundation of the subsequent δεῖ.

The words of this utterance are in the highest degree simple and clear, but the matter itself which they declare is so much the more deep and inscrutable, as it is the central mystery of the kingdom of God, and of Holy Scripture: all dogmatic theology is involved in the right apprehension of the saying—lifted up as the serpent in the wilderness. Thus much we must observe at the outset with unbiassed minds, that the continuous καί of this verse is equivalent to an explanatory *namely;* only the one heavenly Son of man ascendeth into heaven, and even He only by *such* a lifting up. For it assuredly admits of no doubt that the ὑψωθῆναι in its most obvious meaning thus con-

[1] Bengel: Est hæc *prima*, quæ a Domino facta legitur, Mosis mentio.

nects itself with the preceding words, any more than that it then carries its meaning much deeper and further. To apprehend this, however, we must first carry our researches into another field, and go back to the history, the *καθώς* referring to which becomes the substratum of a marvellous and pregnant *οὕτως*.

In the fortieth year of Israel's wanderings in the desert, when the possession long-deferred was about to be entered on, the Lord gave the people victory over the first Canaanite king who opposed their progress. But they murmured still even to the last, and repeated the ancient cry of repining for which their fathers had died—Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness—us, the children of our fathers, to whom it was promised that we at least should live and possess the good land? We see that Moses does not lead this poor unbelieving people further; he does not bring them to the goal. Chastisement is incessantly renewed as their sin takes new forms, increasing in its rigour as their sin increases. The Lord has large store of instruments with which to inflict it. On this occasion He sends poisonous serpents with burning bite, such as, according to both ancient and modern accounts, infest the Arabian desert; though that which was there "an ordinary occurrence of nature, is now elevated into something extraordinary and frightful." A new anguish of death falls upon them through their sin; the tents of Israel are filled with the stricken and dying; new confessions are made—We have sinned; and Moses is again appealed to for his intercession. Then does mercy once more manifest itself for their health, but through the medium of a sign, the like of which had never been known before. The Lord's silence upon the subject is a strong assurance that Moses *by God's command* lifted up the serpent. He presupposes this as well known; but it is not without design that He mentions *Moses*, to whose revelations and teaching He would point the master in Israel, Moses who was the minister of the law and of wrath, but also the announcer and prophet of the coming salvation. He points his attention again to a *θαυμαστόν*, concerning which, however, thus much had already come to be acknowledged, that it was in its time a *σύμβολον* of the *σωτηρία*, which, according to Wisd. xvi. 6, 7, the Lord God alone could give to His people.

And should *we* limit ourselves to this general reference and application of the sign? The nature of a *symbol* forbids that we should, for the external and present element in it always involves an interpretation and application for something beyond in the future; and true biblical science must learn to discern whither all the symbols of the Old Testament tend as types. Even the Cabbalist interpretations had brought the brazen serpent into connection with the Messiah; but we have here the express testimony upon the subject of that Messiah Himself come in the flesh.

Certain it is, at the outset, that שִׂים אֹתוֹ עַל־נֵס does not express so much as לְנֵס or לְאוֹת; the נֵס was a pole, and indeed no less than a standard (comp. Jahn Archäologie ii. 2, 465, and Jarchi on Numb. xxi. who explains it by פירטינא, pertica); the article which is added in the repetition of the phrase (וַיְשִׂימֵהוּ עַל־הַנֵּס) giving us plainly to understand that this was not a standard now for the first time prepared, but the already existing central main standard of Israel which may be presumed to have been in the midst of the camp. This does not, however, exclude the idea, it rather involves it, that the serpent similarly was a *sign* to be looked at, as every standard is; and here evidently a most significant sign, since *God* appoints nothing arbitrarily and without a deep meaning. Hence there is immediately to be discerned, when we look away from or more narrowly into the external circumstance, a *σύμβολον*, or as the Vulgate somewhat indefinitely, though not inaccurately has it—pro signa. For נֵס and אוֹת are of themselves and independently related, comp. Numb. xxvi. 10. The serpent was lifted up upon the נֵס and itself was a נֵס, in order that all Israel might *look* with faith upon it for the promised healing. This is the first point, but in the thing which God set up to be looked at, there lay a prophetic signification, and that is the second. The view which is now so generally and fondly held[1] wars against the whole character of the Old Testament, against all Scripture, against the principle of

[1] Schleiermacher: thus lifted up, that is, generally exhibited to men as a saving sign. Ebrard: Christ is exhibited by God to men as a Saviour, in the same manner as the brazen serpent was exhibited for the people's healing! Hofmann: Just so has the Saviour of the world been publicly set forth, that man might behold His sufferings and His death.

all our Lord's and His Spirit's interpretations in the New Testament; the view, namely, which refuses to allow of any deeper truth in the type, but insists that the tertium comparationis is merely the most general and external matter, the suspension or open exhibition. (Isa. xi. 10, concerning the Messiah : עֹמֵד לְנֵס עַמִּים.) In this manner men weaken and etherialize this great and solemn though difficult saying, and call it "holding fast the most spiritual sense of the figure"—while we contend that the whole body of this shadow, so to speak, its outline and figure too must correspond to the substance in Christ. It may well be that Nicodemus *at first* thought only of a "coming manifestation of the Messiah's dignity;"[1] but that was only the first dawn of intelligence; both to *him* and to *us* the Lord's word had infinitely more to say. Nor will Luthardt's opposition turn us away from a profounder apprehension; and we are convinced that there are multitudes of believing inquirers into Scripture who will lose in due time the residue of their opposition to such mysticism as this.

The article of itself *τὸν ὄφιν*—too seldom observed, and, alas, wanting altogether in our common translation—points not merely back to the well-known history, but stands in a close parallelism with *τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*, so that (as Jacobi says) the Lord assuredly must intend to indicate "not only an analogy in the *ὕψωσις*, but an analogy also in the *ὄφις*." The veteran Hiller of Würtemberg[2] urged, with the utmost simplicity and point, that the two subjects for which one and the same predicate stands are by that circumstance placed in close correspondence, as in the case of all similar explanations of types: consequently the serpent is most assuredly as much a type of the person of Christ, as the paschal lamb, the rock, Jonas, and so forth. The meaning is no other than this—The serpent represents Me, it is Myself! He who looked at *it* lived—he who believed on *Him*—are expressions which perfectly coincide. Israel perishing in the wilderness is a type of humanity in its misery, and this belongs to the setting of the figure; but the brass

[1] Ammonius: *τὸ ὑψοῦσθαι, ἐμφανῆ καὶ ἐπίσημον γίγνεσθαι.*

[2] Who defended his interpretation against Dr Huth of Erlangen in a special treatise. Stuttg. 1759.

seems merely the indifferent material, one kind of which must be chosen, and certainly does not (as Fikenscher thinks) precisely intimate its indestructible continuance. As it regards the relation which must then be traced between the Hebr. נְחֹשׁ and נְחֹשֶׁת (to which Numb. xxi. 9 significantly points) we freely confess that it is beyond our comprehension;[1] and must merely suggest the correspondency which has been traced in biblical symbolism between brass and the false gold of corrupted earthly humanity.[2]

Menken, in his well-known treatise, which, with all its dogmatic bias, is always acute, takes his stand upon the first impression and apprehension of the Israelites, and makes prominent the paradox as itself suggesting its interpretation, though he arbitrarily assumes too much for the standing-point of the Old Testament. It cannot even be proved that the נֵס had been a banner of Jehovah, of the Messenger or the Messiah, and in this we agree with Jacobi. But the choice of any figure generally[3] was itself sufficiently remarkable, and especially the choice of the serpent-figure; while the exhibition of this paradoxical sign of healing just at the end of the wandering and on the very border of the promised land, at a critical and significant turning-point of their history (which, as far as we know, has not been observed upon by any), furnishes a new element for the expectation of a profound meaning. The Israelites might not form any images after their own mind, either of the gods or of their own God, for purposes of worship; still less, magical figures for protection and help after the manner of the heathen; yea, they might not devise to themselves even common symbols of instruction, such as those with which the ancient world abounded. Nevertheless God reserved to Himself the right to *give* them symbols for their whole symbolical and typical dis-

[1] Since such combinations, as Kanne (Christus im a. T. ii. S. 122–128) imputes to us, go beyond the bounds of rational investigation.

[2] Thus wrote to me the late v. Meyer: "a symbol of the earthly and human, consequently of the human nature of the Redeemer, as gold is the symbol of the Divine." Comp. hereupon Bahr's conjectures on the Symbolik des mosaischen Kult i. 285.

[3] From which Justin Martyr also against Trypho sets out, in the 60th chap. which treats of this.

pensation, and this was one of them. Israel well understood, in opposition to all superstitious error,[1] that the cure came not διὰ τὸ θεωρούμενον, but from God, τὸν πάντων σωτῆρα, τὸν ῥυόμενον ἐκ παντὸς κακοῦ (as the Book of Wisdom says); God had already, in the beginning of their wanderings, testified—I am the Lord that healeth thee! Ex. xv. 26. But the "apparent *contradiction* between the *sign* of healing and the healing itself" opposed to their faith! Hiller: "it was against all the convictions of the people that God should exhibit an *unclean animal* in their pure encampment, where the tabernacle of God was, to His pure people as a sign of their healing." Gossner: "The Israelites might have thought—why should we gaze upon the serpent, the *fearful* and hateful animal? What could this do but make us worse. We cannot endure this." More, indeed, than unclean and hateful generally, it was just such a serpent as those poisonous ones, through whose bites they were perishing! This was *then* their first and most obvious thought, not immediately that of the devil as Menken prematurely maintains—"from Genesis to Revelation the serpent is the symbol of Satan through the whole Bible." Is there no exception to this, is there no manifold application of this symbol in other cases? We must, however, admit that there lay in the Divine intention an undertone of reference to the serpent in paradise which the people might afterwards understand, as they knew by tradition, independently of Moses' narrative, the serpent's history; the serpents sent for punishment looked back to the original of sin, they were a revelation of *the sin* in its corresponding chastisement, and pointed to the primordia of the evil which had now broken forth with such malignity. The application of the serpent as the "symbol of the healing art," as with Œsculapius and among the Egyptians (for which Winer decides), can have no place among the Israelites, whose symbols and types form a system exclusive, compact, and one in itself. Thus the serpent-symbol assuredly stands in one great series of references, in harmony with the first essential bite

[1] Dei mos non est, sed diaboli potius, se obligare pacto ad signum et rem externam, ut ea extante *ex opere operato* ipse operetur mirabilia. Cocceii. Ultim. Mosis § 1064.

of the serpent, with sin and its poison, with Satan and with death.

This, then, being admitted, and even stoutly maintained, there arises on all sides a spirit of contradiction which argues upon that very ground that the *symbol of Satan*[1] cannot by any possibility be made into a figure of the Saviour at the same time. Here Menken and Kern, Lücke and Sack, with many others, are at one, and we have Hofmann finally deciding in his often too peremptory and unguarded manner, that "the comparison between the Son of man and the brazen serpent is altogether inadmissible, since the former is in the likeness of those who are to be healed, the latter, on the contrary, is the similitude of those which caused the malady."[2] We simply, however, appeal with Hiller to the fact that, according to all the rules of language, the Lord does incontrovertibly thus connect together τὸν ὄφιν and τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου;[3] we appeal to the simple feeling of a thousand readers who would be very hardly persuaded that only one predicate is here attached to two quite diverse subjects, and that only the ὑψωθῆναι is referred to in the οὕτως. We must learn to estimate rightly the character of a scriptural type; that within the circle of one fundamental idea it admits a wide comprehension of significance; so that symbolical language is not to be closely and logically pressed, but apprehended in its depth and amplitude, with a certain indefiniteness pervading all its precision. He who will not, or cannot, understand this will never be a sound interpreter of the types.

Hence we set out with its widest comprehension, and say with Jacobi[4] first of all—"As the serpent was from the be-

[1] Which Vitringa sees in the brazen serpent, following the precedent of others (Fr. Burmann to wit), and keenly and earnestly defending his view.

[2] What follows, "since the serpent of brass was incapable of suffering, being without life," forgets in the heat of argument that a figure never has the life of the thing represented, and yet as a figure represents the thing itself.

[3] Hence Euthymius simply recognises as well this reference as the included allusion to Satan: ἐκεῖ μέν, ἐπεὶ δι' ὄφεως ἡ βλάβη, δι' ὄφεως καὶ ἡ θεραπεία· ἐνταῦθα δὲ, ἐπεὶ δι' ἀνθρώπου ὁ θάνατος εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον, δι' ἀνθρώπου καὶ ἡ ζωὴ παρεγένετο.

[4] In his posthumous sermons, i. 251.

ginning a type of sin, which poisons the heart of man, so the serpent lifted up was to the people *an humbling sign of their transgression*"—a representation of their guilt in connection with the remedy, and in order to it. We ask—Is it not so in the Cross of the Son of man? Further, a *figure* of the *evil* brings its cure—and is it not so in the Cross? Deeper still: "the poison itself was cured through the poison being changed into its remedy,"[1]—and is it not so on the Cross? "As then the remedy of God so profoundly abased itself as to operate in the *form* of the poisonous animal, so does the Eternal Remedy now condescend to ransom the world in the form of the deepest curse of the world, the crucified."[2] All this is sound and true, but has not yet reached the central point of the type, which cannot consist solely in such abstractions and generalities, but in the *concrete personality* of Him who is shadowed and typified. All the wonderful influences of this most wonderful paradox must have their root in the *person* of Him who thus, hanging on the Cross, became the healing of humanity. He becomes such as *the Son of man*, according to His own simple and significant declaration, that is, ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας (Rom. viii. 3), in the form of *our* sin, and death, and curse—for men too are called in Scripture serpents, and a generation of vipers. Chrysostom, and afterwards Bengel, said justly—As *this* serpent, without poison, is Christ the Man without sin, but made sin for us, that we might οὕτως be healed; surrendered to death and Satan that He might οὕτως *overcome* Satan and death. This is the marvellous mystery of the brazen serpent; and thus most accurately, perfectly, and plainly does the type correspond with the Antitype. "That the serpent *at the same time* reminds us of that which had seduced men, strengthens the idea of the representation; it is the symbol of the sin, which takes the place of the sin itself." (Von Gerlach on Numb. xxi.) "The serpent *suspended* signified that the power of the serpent-poison was overcome." (*Tholuck.*) And all the more obviously if it was the standard of war and victory upon which the symbol, turned into healing, was hung. The serpent, that is, the sin which broke forth

[1] V. Meyer, Bl. für höh. Wahrh. ii. 103.

[2] Lange Leben Jesu ii. 503.

through it upon humanity, its bite and poison, is overcome and done away; not indeed as Menken, Hasenkamp, Collenbusch, and Irving, with error ever deepening into the most perilous heresy, will have it, as if in the body of Jesus the original sin of all humanity was concentrated, for it is still no more than an ὁμοίωμα; but it is as truly as wonderfully done away by means of this crucifixion of the old man *in effigie*, through *contemplating* which new life springs up within him. Finally, it is in fact *as if* Satan himself hung upon the Cross, the original, hereditary Enemy being overcome, and held up to scorn and derision, and open show (see Col. ii. 15). All this in its comprehensiveness lies in this voluminous type, which furnishes the *second* great promise after the Protevangelium in paradise, being a continuation and exposition of that; and all finds its fulfilment in the Person of the Crucified. He who thinks this too ample and manifold forgets that all the diverging radii are one in the centre: the brazen serpent can no more be successfully expounded otherwise, than the mystery of the Cross can be folded into one partial and restricted dogma.

Οὕτως, that is, by a marvellous and yet most actual, Divine paradox, sin is taken away, even while it appears to break out, and exhibit itself in the most awful forms; thus death is put to death by a dying One (Augustin: appenditur mors ut nihil valeat mors)—thus is Satan overcome, even while he is exhibiting himself to the world for the last time as its conqueror and possessor, but only in the form of a vain image of terror; this is the reality of its Lord and Destroyer! Thus only comes healing to humanity sick of sin and unto death; οὔτε βοτάνη οὔτε μάλαγμα (Wisd. xvi. 12) could afford help here, no herb grows in rerum naturâ to avert otherwise this death, nor any other mollifying unguent in all the pharmacy of heaven and earth for this sore. But the *Son of Man* in His boundless condescension to our low estate opens through the Cross a new way to heaven *for Himself, and for us with Him.*

The ὑψοῦσθαι of Christ, once more, must be regarded as referring, through its connection with the foregoing, to His ascension; comp. chap. viii. 28, xii. 32, 33. But just as in those other passages, there is here a comprehensive allusion to that crucifixion which was analogous to the suspension of the ser-

pent. "In any case the Evangelist everywhere by this representation shows that he thought of the *death* of Christ, and of no glorification *without* this,"—is the admission even of Baumgarten-Crusius. But we are well assured that the Apostle's apprehension and interpretation of the words of Jesus must accord with the exact meaning in which He uttered them. "I go not back to heaven except by death,"—this is the plain intimation of our Lord, capable of being understood as well by Nicodemus here as by the Jews in the other passages, through the current phraseology for crucifixion;[1] in this case, indeed, made still more obvious by the lifting up of the serpent. The cross was not, however, "a manner of His death in itself indifferent"—rather it was highly significant, and in many respects, which we need not now repeat in particular, Christ knew of His *cross* from the beginning, as we here see, and indicates here, as elsewhere, by this marvellous discourse concerning His ὑψοῦσθαι, that great and profound truth which is thus expressed in Christian phraseology—*Crux scala cœli.* Here also, as elsewhere, He immediately subjoins to His saying concerning His heavenly dignity, another which refers to His preparatory sufferings:—Yea, there is before Me an exaltation, but "it will take the form of the deepest abasement." (Jacobi.) Would not Nicodemus in his after-meditation be reminded of Isa. liii., of the previous יָרוּם וְנִשָּׂא וְגָבַהּ מְאֹד which is immediately, as by an οὕτως, followed by the abasement?

The mysterious and absolute Δεῖ, which the Lord already utters long before Matt. xvi. 21, and to which His ἔδει after the resurrection, Lu. xxiv. 26, has only to look back, is here, as well as in other related passages, based upon the *cited scripture*, though Lücke as vainly as arbitrarily denies it; it consequently indicates the *type* of the serpent as the *prediction* of the Divine counsel, and is altogether equivalent to a ἵνα πληρωθῇ ἡ γραφή. The *Scripture* here, however, is only indeed the testimony, convincing to Israel, of that everlasting *counsel of God*, which again rests (in connection with the full freedom of redeeming love, ver. 16) upon the *necessity in the nature of the case*, which

[1] Syr. ܨܠܝܒܐ the cross, Chald. צְלָב to hang, Ezra vi. 11; comp. Targ. Esth. ix. 13. The amphibolia in our Lord's use of the word has its remarkable preparation in the typical narrative of Joseph, Gen. xl. 13, 19.

rendered *such* a salvation necessary. That is to say, and this alone comes *here* into prominence, on the part of man, who can only thus be remedially restored to spirit and life, to a new birth; for the second δεῖ is at the same time not merely a parallel, but a consequence and development, of that first Δεῖ ὑμᾶς in ver. 7. Anything like *arbitrariness* in the Divine will and act is not to be thought of in relation to these words. As the ground of the necessity that a heavenly Son of man *must* for us, that is, in the fellowship of our nature as its representative, re-open heaven by the energies of His own life and spirit, lies in the impotence of *our* flesh; so, further, the reason that even *this* sinless Son of man can be exalted only through the cross, on which He is made sin, lies manifestly in that flesh which He in ὁμοίωμα has taken from us, in order thus to enter into spiritual relation with our race. We must not therefore shrink from regarding, though in rigorous conformity with our sacred text, the death of Jesus upon the cross as a birth also in analogy with our own new birth effected through it; that is, indeed, as the *full birth and manifestation* of His miraculous person, of that twofold mediatorial nature which already existed in His first birth. *Every* son of man must go through the cross. A dying precedes the new birth, and *the dying of Christ* must first have an actual fellowship with that death which is necessary to us, in order that it may become life *to us* through our fellowship with Him. This mysterious doctrine of redemption is incontrovertibly found in the testimony to Nicodemus, nor need we shrink from repeating our earlier remarks upon this subject. "The Lord says nothing to Nicodemus about disobedience and compensation *sensu formali juridico*, but He speaks of the flesh, and of the regaining of life *sensu essentiali physico*. He speaks of the *gift* of the only-begotten Son, lifted up by the cross as the Son of man, in order that we by faith in Him might be *capable* of having life; for giving and having are, in ver. 16, most strictly connected together. He says nothing of a *righteousness* which required His death, but utters that great word concerning the *love* of God which gave Himself to man; as it regards righteousness and judgment, He only says that the light reproves the darkness, and that he who hateth the light, after its full manifesta-

tion in the world, falls still under condemnation. Finally and especially, He says nothing about the necessity of *opening the hands of eternal love* by His own death, which those hands themselves inflicted; but the whole discourse points to this, that the *hand of faith*, which is all that is left to man, must be opened again to receive and to embrace eternal life. For, from the beginning of His words He lays the foundation of His teaching here, not upon an *inability of God*, but upon the *inability of man*."—We would now, however, more fully than we did then, acknowledge the strict necessity of admitting, and of constantly presupposing, the *other* side of the question, the holy *justice* of God in connection with *such* love (the οὕτως, ver. 16).[1] Meanwhile the Lord's example should always be followed by us in bearing our testimony in His service; that is, when we would win the souls of Nicodemuses, we should not overwhelm them with elaborate systems of satisfaction, which go straight to the mysteries of the highest heavens, but should rise with them thitherward, as the Lord here does, from earth and from man himself; we should not direct their thoughts instantly and precipitately to the *adytum fori Divini*, but first of all to the *adytum naturæ humanæ*.

Even in regard to *this* testimony, notwithstanding its laying hold upon our awakened sense of need, it is of essential necessity that we *believe*. Our Lord, however, in His πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτόν speaks not of that faith which first receives the word spoken, and which is only a commencement and introduction, but of that *full surrender of the soul to the person and operation of the apprehended Redeemer set forth* which further proceeds from it. This is the first εἰς αὐτόν in the lips of Jesus, though the Evangelist has given it before, chap. i. 12, ii. 11, 23. It signifies more than holding a thing true, more also than believing

[1] So that again it is incorrect to say: *Poterat* enim sine ullo adventu Christi (sine cruce) solummodo loqui *Deus* et solvere κατάραν, sed spectandum est quid hominibus sit utile, neque quid sit τὸ δυνατὸν τοῦ θεοῦ. (As Gelpke in Röhr cites from Athanas. orat. 3 contra Arianos, ed. Col. tom. i. p. 430.) For the Creator cannot be regarded as working otherwise than in correspondence with the nature of the creature; but has voluntarily bound Himself, in the act of creation, to the laws which are inwrought into the creature's existence, in all His subsequent relations with it.

a man and what he says, because he says it; it is perfectly parallel with the Old Testament האמין ביהוה וחסה ביהוה, and vindicates again to this crucified Son of man His Divine honour and dignity; comp. chap. v. 23, xiv. 1. This faith can and will only have place, the Lord designs to say, when I am lifted up, and am exhibited to faith as the Crucified, and through the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour. Jno. xii. 23, 32. It is a faith in the Crucified as such, not merely *quoique* but *parceque*. It is analogous to the *beholding* of the serpent in the wilderness; for it is first on the cross, and only on the cross, that the crown of glory shines forth in the midst of the crown of thorns; and in Pilate's superscription is heard the voice of God —This is My Son, a Prince, and a Saviour! It is the trust in need of those who are tormented with the bite of the serpents, and lying in the agonies of death, which now contemplates the sign; without any vain reasoning—How may this be? But on that account it is immediately experienced that it *is so*. "The encampment of Israel, with its serpents and corpses, was a figure of the world" (Richter's Hausbibel). Yet more, as von Gerlach beautifully expounds on the Old Testament: "With every new wound there came ever new healing; through looking at the brazen serpent it is not said that the fiery serpents were immediately destroyed, but that their bite was rendered harmless. Here also lies a typical meaning." That is, the temptations and the conflicts of sin continue among the regenerate, and their help is found in continually repairing to the cross. The spiritual Israelites are still, even after many victories, weary in the way and tired of their manna; they must, therefore, still feel for their discipline the bite of the evil serpents, from which that lifted up upon the standard can alone save them.

Thus it is not by one instantaneous transition, but gradually, that all who believe on Him do not perish in that death which is the wages of their sin, and into which the flesh, the old man, is fallen. That which in the type was recovery and preservation for temporal life (he shall live, Numb. xxi. 8), is here exalted into ζωὴ αἰώνιος. This is again the first mention of that deep word of promise, which is assumed from the Old Testament; but that which is there postponed (Dan. xii. 2) till after the resurrection, is here brought nigh and becomes a present

ἔχειν;[1] here, as everywhere, it signifies the immediate beginning of the new life of God's Spirit in the soul, in the new birth through faith. The difficult now becomes easy, the impossible possible; *every man*, who in entire confidence of faith receives this new life coming to him from the Crucified is saved from *eternal death,—that fearful antithesis* which, as the kernel of the ἀπόλητάι, is hinted at in silence.

Right gladly would we now read on without interruption, following the scriptural discourse as it unfolds itself before our eyes; but criticism stands in our path, and throws before us its little impediment, which we must first remove. What follows is no longer, forsooth, the discourse of Jesus, but the continued addition of the Evangelist! "The colloquy with Nicodemus breaks off at this point;—the night conversation with this significant reference to the future was suspended"—writes Jacobi, as if the matter were conclusively settled. A strange break this, an ungracious dismissal of the poor scholar, with that *crux* interpretum mundi resounding in his ears. Either some external occurrence occasioned this interruption, and then the Evangelist would have recorded it; or the Lord actually here ceased, and Nicodemus was constrained to go, in which case it would have been so said, instead of the discourse being apparently continued with γάρ once and again repeated! And that in a connection where "no boundary marks are found."[2] That great and wonderful saying in ver. 16, the most sublime and simple expression of the eternal mystery of redemption which the Scriptures contain, the "Bibel in Kleinen" as Luther calls it,[3] which the adoring gratitude of Christendom ever has and ever does receive from the lips of Christ, is now stolen from His mouth and appropriated to His disciple. The acute but ambiguous Erasmus was the originator of this piece of criticism, which he introduces with

[1] Jul. Müller: "in the midst of time, the possession of eternal life is offered thee."

[2] For that γάρ evidently shows the commencement of an explanatory appendage of the writer, as Neander thinks, is palpably opposed to the common sense of every unprejudiced mind.

[3] (Bible in miniature.) As the negroes in South Africa come and ask for the book which contains the beautiful words—So God loved the world!

a modest "*videri poterant* verba Evangelistæ;" but now the moderns, following the captious Rosenmüller, have come to maintain it without any reservation. Even the excellent Fikenscher, in his practical exposition, feels himself constrained to repeat it with an unhappy deference to probability, and Kling (Stud. u. Krit. 1836. 1) refers to it as a *recognised* view. Olshausen concisely and without any scruple declares that the Apostle appends here to the Lord's discourse a warning designed especially for the disciples of John! Lücke, however, is bold enough to admit that the more ancient view is "not altogether without foundation," and would mediate by explaining that the hand of the narrator is more visible henceforward than before in enlarging and developing the Lord's words.[1] Baumgarten-Crusius, an unprejudiced authority, first to our great satisfaction contradicted this: he says, what no honest reader can deny, that "there follow now no such detailed explanations of what had been said as St John might indeed have given, but *new*, *progressive*, and *conclusive* truths. The conversation would break off too abruptly at this point, while ver. 21 gives a harmonious conclusion." Rightly spoken! Luthardt has at last effectually overturned the view which had been becoming predominant. We therefore are all the more determined to hold fast our former exposition of the question. But what, then, were the grounds for closing the colloquy with Nicodemus at ver. 15, and for which so many respectable expositors challenged so much respect? Let us hear them.

The application to Nicodemus, and the individual element in the conversation, are said almost entirely to disappear from ver. 16 onwards. While we put the best construction on this modest "almost," we are bold enough to deny the entire statement. The dialogue *form* certainly ceases, for the very natural reason that Nicodemus no longer protests or questions, but has become a listening disciple. Being such, can we suppose that the Master would not give him further instruction? That which He says

[1] Yet worse de Wette:—"The Evangelist, after having *before*, especially vers. 13–15, *put his own words into the mouth of Jesus*, releases himself entirely from ver. 16 onwards." For here it is dishonourably avowed that he wrote down his own words *as* the words of Jesus! Procul este profani!

in vers. 16, 17, is so entirely directed to the pharisaical Jewish individuality and exclusiveness, as to be perfectly adapted and necessary to this Pharisee; and then vers. 18–21 are warning and quickening appeals to the conscience, than which nothing could have been better adapted to bring to a full decision the man who was inclined to believe and yet kept back by some restraint—as our exposition will show, tracing those appeals down to their significant conclusion :—only come thou to the light, thou visitor of the night-season! There is much reason to suppose that there were other rejoinders, as St John only gives an epitome of the whole; but inasmuch as Nicodemus' further words were no longer strictly characteristic, and not, in the sense of his former words, generally typical and symbolical, but more individual, St John omits them, his object being to record the Saviour's testimony, and not to give a complete account of the conduct of Nicodemus. Finally, it may be supposed more than probable that some words passed, not immediately connected with the great subject, on his departure; but that they also for the same reason are left out, and every Nicodemus who now reads left to the undisturbed impression of the concluding words.

Further, the past tense, used as it is after ver. 19 concerning the κρίσις, in ἠγάπησαν and ἦν—is thought to be unsuitable to this early period of our Lord's manifestation. Others object in addition to the ἔδωκεν of ver. 16. But what pettiness is this—to deny to our Lord Jesus what is abundantly seen in all the Prophets, the liberty of speaking prospectively and comprehensively as He here does! Was He not as inwardly conscious of all this, as of His being in the future lifted up? Was He not under the necessity, after He had carried forward His thought to the *condemnation* which threatened and awaited unbelief, to go back to the cause of that condemnation as a thing accomplished? Was it not so at that very time among the people and Scribes of Jerusalem? Does He not Himself turn back to the present in vers. 20, 21? Why is it not argued from the ἀναβέβηκεν of ver. 13 that the Evangelist only could have said that too?

Further, and this is Lücke's first objection, this second part of the discourse bears marks of St John's peculiar phraseology,

especially the μονογενής which is distinctively his. But it may be asked, with all deference—How come we to be so certainly acquainted with the boundaries between the phraseology of Jesus and His disciple, as to be able to use it as an argument against the most evident marks of a connected discourse? Why may we not conversely argue—Jesus Himself uses here, according to St John's account, the word μονογενής, and therefore it is not absolutely peculiar to St John. Assuredly it must be allowed that the disciple's[1] entire phraseology and vocabulary would take its fashion from his Master's, just as is the case with well-instructed pupils of our own day; how much of transition from the one to the other, and how much common to both in their expressions, must there necessarily have been, thus defying all attempts to define the peculiar language either of Master or disciple! I think, indeed, using my own privilege of being in turn the assailant, that such a remarkable term as μονογενής would never have been used by the disciple without his Master's precedent. Moreover, the word is *here*, as we shall see, used with some allusion to the offering of Isaac.

Finally, it is said that the Evangelist *elsewhere* gives examples of the same practice—that of appending his own comment to the word of another;—many indeed declare that he *often* does this, and call it his "customary manner;" just as they speak of St Matthew's custom of joining together sundry and diverse discourses. We ask—Where? and Tholuck answers,—"We have three instances, ch. i. 16, iii. 16, and iii. 31." To begin with the last, it is imagined by the expositors; as is the second, though the great Bengel in this instance is among them. If we were commenting upon the entire Gospel and not upon the discourses of our Lord only, we could prove in detail that ch. iii. 31–36 must be regarded as the continuous testimony of the Baptist, nay, that vers. 39 and 31 are essentially connected together. As to this we must be permitted to set our assertion against their assertion, reserving a few words in defence of it for another occasion. We do not deny that the Evangelist and not the Baptist spake ch. i. 16, as the ἡμεῖς πάντες ἐλάβομεν incontrovertibly proves—but that is altogether another

[1] Who, however, as Luthardt remarks, has only used the word μονογενής twice in the Gospel (i. 14, 18), and once in his Epistle, iv. 9.

case. First: it is the Baptist's and not the Saviour's word which precedes; and then it is in the prologue where *the Evangelist generally speaks;* or rather he is citing in ver. 15 alone a sentence from the Baptist's mouth which he takes up into his narrative, using the general μαρτυρεῖ: afterwards beginning anew the *historical* record in ver. 19 with a new scene. This would be the only case of the kind, though it is not strictly of the same kind. We know also a fourth place, which, however, will admit of no collation with this in the third chapter. It is ch. xii. 44–50, where the Evangelist sums up in conclusion utterances of Jesus earlier delivered; but they were actually earlier utterances, and it is so recorded.[1]

No, as the double γάρ (vers. 16 and 17) renders it in the highest degree grammatically hard to make here a demarcation between the words of Jesus and the words of the Evangelist, so we can further appeal from learning to the simple readers, and ask them if they do not read on to ver. 21 as the continued words of our Lord Himself. Would St John, being about to say that Jesus went from Jerusalem into the land of Judæa, thus previously interpolate his own reflections? No Apostle, least of all St John, would be bold enough thus to incorporate his own words with the words of the Lord without explanation, and thus confuse the reading-congregation of believers in all future times. St John is extremely scrupulous in his communication of our Lord's discourses; and often on that account distinguishes the Lord's proper words from *his own* comments; he does not represent the Lord as saying all that which he in his Gospel teaches concerning Him—for instance, that by Him the world was made, and so forth. This is acknowledged by Baumgarten-Crusius, who further says that "it almost appears as if he took more than ordinary care in this portion, not to give anything other or more than the strict original."

Let the reader now call to mind what we preliminarily indicated upon ver. 11, as to the connection of the whole discourse down to ver. 21. Assuredly the Lord's testimony would

[1] The transition from what was said to Peter to the instruction for the Galatians, which we admit to be gradual in Gal. ii., is compared by Tholuck with our case (Glaubwürdigk. S. 335); but the instances are quite distinct, as it is only an *Apostle* who is speaking, and the *same* who writes the *epistle.*

have been left imperfect and uncompleted, if broken off at ver. 15. Can we suppose that He would have stopped short at this obscure word without carrying on His reference, according to His constant wont, from Himself the Son of man, to the *Father?* Would He not here also introduce Himself as the Son of God, as chap. ii. 16 in that word which had been His first utterance in Nicodemus' hearing? Would *God*, as His Father, be unreferred to further than in the expression "kingdom of God," though he owed to Nicodemus the true explanation of his "come from *God?*" Would He not refer back what Moses did to the counsel of *God*, and that *disertis verbis?* Must He not declare Himself to be the Son of God, when faith in Him as lifted up involves most assuredly no less than—This is the Son of God?[1] Would He abruptly break off, without following this hard and severe discourse (Jacobi: "till now He had spoken, as it were, in tongues"), by a simply attracting and warning appeal to faith, as on every other similar occasion? Would He not go on, after all his preparation, to enlarge His word for the whole *world*, and at the same time, tell the representative of Israel what He had to say to the people and the scribes in common?

Most assuredly there is the clearest connection and the most essential unity of purpose in the entire discourse. The apparent close passes into the For, which is a new beginning of the overflowing words, leading to His last and best revelations. First, there is the comprehension of all that had gone before in its ultimate principle, *the everlasting love of the Father to the world.* "After the dawn, in which there remained much obscurity, the clear, bright sun arises"—so comments the Berlenburger Bibel on ver. 16. We give now the plan of the whole, from this central point looking backwards and forwards, keeping in mind the *tri-unity* of the whole subject as the Church has conceived it, which has appointed the two halves of the one great text as the Gospels for Whitsunday and Trinity Sunday.

[1] Richter: "The *For* of ver. 16 shows, what every child must feel, that the Lord is still speaking. Christ rises in His discourse from the Holy Spirit to the Son. Would He pass by the Father? Assuredly not!" Alas, we afterwards find the groundless assertion that "the Evangelist begins to speak in vers. 19–21."

The whole might be summed up in the following statement: —God gives up His only-begotten Son, as the Son of man for the world, to death (upon the Cross), in order that every one who believeth in Him may have power to enter into the kingdom of heaven through the Spirit of regeneration (water of the new life) obtained by that death, and imparted through its virtue.

I. A *birth* of the Spirit from above is *necessary* for the entrance of the man, who is flesh born of flesh, into the kingdom of God.

1. This *assertion* itself, which immediately meets the inquirer as he enters.
   a. In its most general expression—*born again*, ver. 3.
   b. The explanation of this in defence against the objection: and first, explanation of the entire statement—of water, and of the Spirit, ver. 5; then, of the two main ideas, *birth* and *Spirit*, through similitude and contrast with physical birth, ver. 6 (Leading to the ground of that necessity).
2. The *maintenance* of this assertion, as an absolute *testimony*.
   a. In its most general expression—marvel not! ver. 7.
   b. For free, certain, though inexplicable as its symbol in physical nature, is the Spirit Himself, and every one that is born of Him, ver. 8 (that is, immediately I, Myself, with My present testimony—transition to the second part).

II. This eternal life (or the Spirit of regeneration from God) *must* be obtained for all believers, by the Son of man come down from heaven and ascending up to heaven, through a "lifting up" (a paradoxical death of shame which yet lifts up towards heaven, an exhibition and glorification upon the Cross).

1. *Introductory requirement of faith*:—it must be received on the testimony of the Spirit whose influence is felt.
   a. The (*earthly*) need in human nature for a new birth, which a master in Israel should have known, ver. 10—and which is testified by the true "Teacher come from God," by Him who has come from heaven, ver. 11.
   b. But also the (*heavenly*) mystery inseparable therefrom, concerning the person of this preeminent "Son of man," ver. 12.

2. The *declaration itself* to be believed :—

a. Only this one heavenly Son of man hath the new life of God in humanity. No other (son of man) bringeth it down; but He that came down from heaven—*hath* it already for Himself, inasmuch as He is still in heaven, ver. 13; but must become capable of imparting it to others, as having come down to earth, through His own death and ascension to heaven, ver. 14.

b. And then all who believe *receive* it from Him, ver. 15.

III. And this is the superabounding gift of the *Father's* love to all the world, from which only persevering unbelief excludes itself.

1. It is a gift of the universal love of God only conditioned by faith.

a. God so loveth the world, that He *giveth His only-begotten Son* (that is, this Son of man!) for the life of every one that believeth, ver. 16—consequently the whole world, (if the whole world believed), should not be condemned, but should be saved.

b. The *decision and judgment* stands in our believing or not believing in the name of the Son of God, ver. 18.

2. But our *faith* in *Him who has come* must consist in our *coming to this light*, and thus by deeds of sincerity laying the foundation for a new manifestation of the works of God.

A. The light is come into the world;

B. But there is a distinction made among men, since

a. The unbelieving come not to the light, because men generally by nature love rather the darkness of their deeds, ver. 19—and he who thus persists in sin, hateth and fleeth from the light, ver 20.

b. They who believe, on the contrary, perform in their coming the only work of faith possible to them, and thus attain to the works of God (ver. 21). This is the concluding word which comprehends under one the gentle *beginnings of faith*, and the lofty *consummation of the new birth!*

Ver 16. *God loved*, because He is God, from eternity—such is His nature and His essence! this utterance of our Lord is

already equivalent to that equally deep and beautiful saying, which was reserved for His Apostle—*God is love.* "It is nothing wonderful that God loves. The light shines, for to shine is its nature. The fire burns, for to burn is its nature." (H. Müller.) God loved, in the most general sense, *the world* before it was created, for only in love and for love He created it. Since it has existed, His love hath upheld it; what else would have become of it? The love of God appears and approves itself in all that is not God. Thus speak we with perfect knowledge, but thousands delude themselves concerning it, and do not penetrate to the great mystery of *that* love which is spoken of in this saying, which is quite new, and based upon other than the general and common ground. *In this* is manifest the love of God, the Apostle repeats, 1 Jno. iv. 9—as if otherwise and before it had been revealed in nothing. *The world* τὸν κόσμον, not the universe or the creation generally, but οἱ ἄνθρωποι, ver. 19, lying in wickedness, the lost world of sinners, which in its sin and darkness hateth God, as appeared when His express image and likeness was manifest, and experienced—the world hateth Me! When *that* begins to be understood, the wonder arises anew, and can never cease, in the contemplation of the χρηστότης καὶ φιλανθρωπία, Tit. iii. 4, of the love of God to sinners and enemies, Rom. v. 8, 10. From this no man is excluded, but there is consolation and assurance even for the vilest of those who appertain to this evil world; for κόσμος can never signify a company of the elect (according to Lampe the universitas electorum!) What love is that which avails to bring together again God and men! Love gives—God gave the greatest imaginable gift, Himself in the Son of His bosom. Love takes pity unto salvation—God does His part, ἵνα σωθῇ ὁ κόσμος. Love surrenders itself, stoops, enters into the woe and pain of others, when their help demands it—the Son of God as the son of man devotes Himself to bear man's sin and curse. For such is the connection of *this* οὕτως with ver. 14: it continues it and gives its reason, and thus both furnish an overwhelming and ever-recurring answer to the πῶς δύναται of all questioners.

Certain it is, though often overlooked, that on that very account this οὕτως does not indicate simply the astonishing, immeasurable greatness of that love; as if it were—*so much!*

"The Gospel does not only establish the position that God loved the world, but lays down the way and manner in which He loved it."[1] Only in the Son, and His sacrifice: not in any other way than that; for the *Divine* love, with all its compassion, can never be sundered from that justice which reveals, judges, and righteously takes away sin. The ὥστε, also, which here occurs alone in St John, has hence a most impressive emphasis. When it is not rationistically slurred over, but admitted and confessed, as it here and in the whole Gospel is plainly declared, that the love of God itself could and would save man only through the self-sacrifice of His son;—then, on the other hand, it becomes plain, that here, as in the whole Gospel, *love* is set forth as the ultimate, everlasting ground of all, and consequently that, in the ordinary sense of the old dogmatic, we should not speak of any "reconciliation *of God*." They who stiffly rest upon that notion, hesitate not to comment thus:—"To perceive the depth and breadth of this expression, *let it be reversed*—So God abhorred the ruined world, that it needed the surrender of His only-begotten Son—!"[2] But our inmost feeling revolts against this inversion, and although the inverted sentence may admit of a sound interpretation, yet it is most significant that *the Lord* did not and could not use such language. The entire Scripture knows nothing of the typus doctrinæ which would make anger or abhorrence prominent over love.[3] In this *giving up* it is God Himself who loves, gives, and reconciles.

He who was before designated as the Son of man who came down *from heaven*, is now also appropriately named the *Son of God:* and this expression would direct the thought of Nicodemus to ch. ii. 16, and then to the prophetic word. In addition, He is the *Only-begotten*, Heb. יָחִיד, for the Lord refers to a prophetic type, the offering of Isaac, of which this form of expression would have reminded almost any Israelite, especially one of their Scribes. The LXX. express only the ἀγαπητός: but

[1] Remark of a friend in J. G. Müller, vom Glauben der Christen, T. 431. Οὕτως in 1 Jno. iv. 11, also, is *not* merely—so much!

[2] Otto von Gerlach on our passage.

[3] And the question arises (as Münchmeyer says)—whether even Ecclesiastical dogmatic theology knows anything of thus typus doctrinæ. That is indeed the question!

here it stands as in Heb. xi. 17, literally and significantly according to the Hebrew, *μονογενής*.[1] Thus all holds well together, and it is made clear that *ἔδωκεν* cannot possibly intimate a simple *gift*. Of course it rests upon the general *fundamental idea* of giving, which is also found in *παρέδωκεν*, Rom. vii. 32 (where *οὐκ ἐφείσατο* incontrovertibly points to Isaac's offering), so that there must be included in it the sense of *χαρίσεται*. Here is the foundation, too, for the *ἔχειν ζωὴν αἰώνιον*; and Christ is from the beginning, as *sent* into the world (ver. 17), the *δωρεὰ τοῦ θεοῦ*, as He terms Himself to the woman of Samaria. But to deny (as Hofmann does, Schriftbeweis I. 197) the transition into *παρέδωκεν*, and reduce, as many do, this *ἔδωκεν* to a mere *ἀπέστειλεν*, contradicts the entire connection in which ver. 16 announces it by *γάρ* as explaining the *ὕψωσις*. It is, indeed, more than the mere echo of the *ὑψωθῆναι* which Jacobi admits. Baumgarten-Crusius, who recognises the allusion to Abraham's history, approaches more nearly to the truth when he refers to other expressions of Christ Himself, such as ch. vi. 51; Matt. xx. 28; Lu. xxii. 19; and says—"with or without additional words the *being given* and *giving one's self* refers to death, in almost every language. It is to be offered, to offer one's self." He signifies, of course, when a living person is spoken of, and then he is undoubtedly right. Let it be observed, further, that this *ἔδωκεν* stands absolutely, there is no *τῷ κόσμῳ* after it. Luthardt would insert it: but we cannot help laying emphasis upon its omission. Even viewed as a *gift*, it is an inestimable boon which the world cares not to *receive;* but God gives it in His immeasurable love for the world's good, whether it be accepted or—rejected and trampled under foot.

The gracious repetition of the following clause—*ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων κ. τ. λ.*—is designed to afford the most encouraging assurance possible, as a counterpoise to the sternness and severity of what had preceded. *Εἰς αὐτόν* also thus derives an additional emphasis. Before—Whosoever believeth on Him thus lifted up, the type of a curse, for blessing: Now, more than that—He that believeth on Him who was given up to this

[1] As it regards the discussion and explanation of this type, I may refer to orthodox expositors generally, and to my exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

by the love of God! *Tot verba, tot pondera*—may be said of this inexpressible and inexhaustible word, beyond all others; a word, which the children of Christ's flock having once learned never afterwards forget; which is for ever evincing its power to comfort the believer through life down to the article of death. But the fulness of its consolation lies in the absolute universality of the love it testifies; in that one only condition of *believing*, by which, though we can never comprehend the great truth, yet may apprehend it to the joy of our souls. The foundation of all is the everlasting love of God towards the world: the aim and end of all is eternal life derived from God, and consummated in Him: the means connecting these is *faith* only. Then be not terrified at the pre-established necessity of the new birth in order to entering the kingdom of God; it is made easy by faith. But on the other hand—make not too light of this faith; for it is the instrument of a new birth, and must receive a Divine principle, and issue in the holy practice of a Divine life.

Ver. 17. "The Divine *aim* of love corresponds with its Divine principle and *ground*." God's will is *not* to judge, that is, to hand over to deserved perdition, but to preserve, to save, to bless through His Son, even the whole world of mankind. It is for the enforcement and confirmation of the paradox—*God* loved the *world*—that there now follows this negative and positive repetition. The positive, and corrective οὐ γὰρ ἵνα κρίνῃ was necessarily associated with ἵνα σωθῇ ὁ κόσμος, for the sake of Nicodemus; inasmuch as the pharisaical Jewish doctrine and phraseology understood by κόσμος only the idolatrous, reprobate, rejected *world of heathenism*. In order to annihilate this idea the Lord leaves Israel (of whose dignity and calling, however, the Lord had before given something out of Scripture for the correction of his *knowledge*) unmentioned, and involved in the common κόσμος: yea, He does this still more emphatically by descending to the simple, common expression ἀπέστειλε, appropriating a term hitherto limited to Israel, to the whole world of mankind. Here, as in Rom. iii. 9, προῃτιασάμεθα γὰρ, Ἰουδαίους τε καὶ Ἕλληνας πάντας ὑφ ἁμαρτίαν εἶναι, even as in ver. 6 all distinction was abolished between them. Judgment was indeed expected at the first coming of the Messiah: but the Pharisees hoped to stand so secure, that they should only behold with their

eyes the punishment of the heathens, and the glorification of Israel. It was indeed, as Ebrard says, the presumptuous spirit of the Pharisees "to *desire* not to be saved, but to be judged!" How significant was this continuation of the discourse to Nicodemus; how calculated to take the veil from his eyes, that he might see the whole breadth and amplitude of the coming *redemption of the world!* And yet men will say, that the reference to him now ceases, and that the colloquy with him here ends!

The κρίνειν, as the opposite of the σώζειν through love, the dealing with man according to strict right and giving him over to ἀπώλεια, remained in the power and justice of God: He *might* have sent the Judge instead of the Saviour, as the οὐ γάρ presupposes. But will not then the Son actually, according to His own testimony elsewhere, also judge the world? To meet this, a qualification is sometimes inserted in the exposition—"not to begin His kingdom with judgment, but with the proffer of general grace," or that He was not *this first time* sent for judgment. So we find it inserted by Nonnus—ἵνα κρίνειε προώριον—before the time. But this is ruinous to the universal, unconditional meaning of this ἀπέστειλεν. The Lord is not to be *sent* a second time; this expression is *never* used of His coming to judgment, for the Son is sent as a servant, not in the majesty of the Father.[1] The ἵνα denotes that one *design* of God in the gift and sacrifice of His Son, His sole and constant design that all, if possible, should be saved; as is abundantly attested by the equally universal "therefore am I come," *e.g.*, Lu. ix. 56; Matt. xviii. 11, 14. The ἐγὼ οὐ κρίνω of Jno. xii. 47 extends forward to the final day of judgment. What the Lord says in apparent opposition to this in Jno. ix. 39 is quite otherwise to be explained: The *result* which follows and was foreseen is quite another matter. These passages are the normal examples of the various use of ἵνα in subsequent Scripture. It is now still further developed that the judgment springs not from the first gracious design of God's love, but proceeds from the self-condemnation of unbelief.

Ver. 18. That immeasurable thought—that the world might

[1] Hence even Acts iii. 20 should not be interpreted of the second coming. See my Reden der Apostel Th. i. S. 91.

be saved! however certainly the Divine counsel provided for it in redemption as possible, is never, alas! reduced to reality. Christ died even for the lost, that they might not and need not *have been* lost; but the world, that is, its far greater portion, which must therefore retain its exclusive name in contradistinction to the new Israel, will not be saved δι' αὐτοῦ, which words therefore emphatically stood last. The *believing* alone conditionates and decides all. Again and again this believing instead of Nicodemus' "we know!" The Lord's present word at the beginning corresponds with His words at the end, Mar. xvi. 16; just as it corresponds with the closing words of the Baptist's testimony in ver. 36 of this same chapter. Ὁ πιστεύων οὐ κρίνεται—compare the development and establishment of this afterwards in ch. v. 24. "But as redemption does not reject the believing heathens, so also the judgment does not spare the unbelieving Jew." (Lange.) We cannot perceive in this ἤδη κέκριται a mild and gentle expression, which contrasts with the terrible one in ver. 36, as if not the positive, permanent ἀπειθεῖν as much as the first exclusion is spoken of.[1] It is as severe and rigorous as it can be; and shows, with ver. 19 following, that the Lord is here disclosing and exhibiting the final cutting off in its first principles. The gentleness of it lies in this, that the Lord would not condemn; but so much the more awful is the judgment of the self-condemned. The κέκριται becomes, as it were, Hithpael in its sense; he has condemned, and cast himself out, since he despises the method of salvation (ver. 14):—ὅτι is not merely *therefore*, on *that account*, but *in that* he believes not. "*He hath not believed*," it is said in the solemn perfect tense; "he hath chosen, decided against himself!" (Lange.) The condemnation "is not an external act; it is rather a work that proceeds from a man's self, from within." (Baumgarten-Crusius.) The hardness of unbelief is already condemnation, judgment drawn upon themselves by those who believe not: comp. 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12. It is not without significance that it is repeated here—εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ μονογενοῦς υἱοῦ; for it is precisely against this *name* of the Son of God, crucified as the Son of man, that unbelief stumbles. This is infinitely more than what Nicodemus began

[1] Lücke in the *first* edition; but this, and the whole contest with Knapp, he has struck out subsequently.

with, ver. 2; it is not the hearing and learning the Teacher's words which will suffice, but the appropriation of the Person and work of the Redeemer, in the believing acknowledgment of His Divine dignity and redeeming might.

And now may a new question arise—Is this possible? God sends, gives up in love, and exhibits to the world His only begotten Son—and are there such as believe not, and lay not hold upon Him? Yea, verily, alas! There are only too many who exhibit, to all that see the kingdom of God in the world with open eyes, the proofs of a present condemnation, no longer concealed in their own consciences. In the wilderness of old nearly all believed, because their bodily life was concerned; here, where the salvation of the soul is at stake, few only believe. So manifest is it, and so has it ever been, since the light of God shone into the world, and the darkness comprehended it not.

Ver. 19. It is not merely a condemnation, but *the* condemnation which is now spoken of. Αὕτη δέ ἐστιν—thus does it proceed; this is the "ground, nature, and evidence of condemnation." Certainly, as we remarked before, such separation and distinction of characters began already plainly to exhibit itself, so that Jesus, referring to what already was taking place, prophetically beheld its whole process down to the end. Why came not all the Rulers, as Nicodemus came, to the miracle-working Son of the Father, that they might at least propose their questions to Him, and ascertain His character? Why did not all the people hang upon His words, from the time of His manifestation to them? Κρίσις like κρίμα, chap. ix. 39, must be conceived according to its fundamental signification of *separation* and *decision*, which are necessarily involved in every act of judgment and condemnation; but we cannot agree with Lücke, that ver. 21 may also be embraced here under the double idea of this κρίσις, for it stands in too close connection with the previous κρίνῃ, κρίνεται, κέκριται to allow this. So that it only refers to one side of the separation; the separation *from* life of the lost, who thus exclude and shut themselves out. The *life*, ver. 16, is at the same time, and at first, the *light* of men; it comes at first into the dead, dark world to reveal its darkness, exhibiting the true condition of things in sin, and also the plan

and counsel of God's salvation: see afterwards chap. viii. 12–26. (The Lord was speaking in the night-season, and the light of His word was now beginning to penetrate the darkness which Nicodemus brought with him.) "We can have no manner of doubt that here also the Redeemer speaks *of Himself*," says Schleiermacher, though even in preaching there was no need to say that. Ἐλήλυθεν returns evidently back to the first ἐλήλυθας ver. 2, and graciously admits the truth now of that διδάσκαλος which was then so discordantly added. Most assuredly, whether in teaching or bearing witness, it is the first office and work of Him who has come to shed the light of truth into the darkness; but even in this first testimony the light must be the light *of life*, the Teacher must announce Himself as the Redeemer, and only He who accepts and inwardly receives this, seeth the light. Nicodemus conversely at first desired *mere* light and teaching *before* life; but the Spirit of life blew upon him in words quite new to him, and gave him effectual answer to all his πῶς by the twice-repeated οὕτως. Hence the assurance repeated now, when he could much better understand it—I am such a Light as this, a teacher unto life, whose testimony is, Believe and live anew! Had not many like him heard this testimony—if not all the world, yet enough for the foundation of his general conclusion that thus it would be to the end? (Let the previous—Ye receive not our testimony—be recalled to mind!)

Men—the explanation of the κόσμος, expressing a slight antithesis with the One who is more than ἄνθρωπος, while it points at the same time to the natural corruption of these men. For these οἱ ἄνθρωποι constitute ever so decidedly the great majority of mankind, that it is spoken in the form of absolute generality: —like men generally, according to their human nature (except in the few exceptions which are accessible to the entrance of the superhuman, divine light which worketh faith), all who have continued mere men and acted as such, have thus loved darkness and have thus opposed themselves to the light which was never altogether absent from the world, even in the ages before that light had fully and properly come among men. It is to us at least perfectly clear that *this* is what the Lord would intimate, when He joins the strong ἠγάπησαν in the retrospect with the universal οἱ ἄνθρωποι; He exhibits the unbelief which

He Himself met with as only the continuation and consequence of all former unbelief in Israel and in the world; nor need we any better defence of the much-contested past tense, than the new answer which this gives to all objection. The exposition which begins with πᾶς γάρ, vers. 20, 21, has its current truth in all ages, for the dark world hath never been, and nowhere is, without a φῶς which prepares for the manifestation of Christ.

But how must we understand the striking and unexpected qualification of μᾶλλον? Men have been very prompt with their solution, after the manner of Rosenmüller,—hic oppositionis est, non comparationis;[1] an assertion which the language would admit, but not the matter itself. Bengel's keener insight saw the truth:—Comparatio non plane impropria. Amabilitas lucis eos perculit, sed obhæserunt in amore tenebrarum, conf. Jno. v. 35. Similis comparatio c. xii. 43. The result is, indeed, that they love *potius* the darkness, instead of that light which is alone worthy of love, and so far the μᾶλλον retains a sharp tone of mournful and complaining irony; yet this very guilt and perversion presupposes that the light previously approves itself to them as worthy of their love, that it at least has enlightened and affected them (φωτίζει chap. i. 9). This is the meaning of Bengel's aptly chosen *perculit*. The light everywhere enforces, at the first moment of its shining, a minimum of love; to stifle this, to restrain this truth in unrighteousness is the inmost, and first guilt of voluntary unbelief, which thus consciously (hence ἤδη κέκριται) makes an evil choice. (Cyrill: προκρίνοντες.) Yet more, for the ἠγάπησαν impressively refers to the ἠγάπησεν of ver. 16; the light of God in the Only-begotten reveals to us a compassionate love which has no parallel, but it avails not to enkindle man's love in return, not even to induce their acceptance of it; man will not submit to be loved, and render the passive return of an appropriation of the unspeakable gift. "This is the awful perversion which sin effects in man's nature; it induces him to hate the light, and to *love the darkness!*"[2] Thus this perverted and unnatural love for the darkness, which, however, to corrupted man is become natural, though

[1] Origen also compared φιλήδονος μᾶλλον ἤ—2 Tim. iii. 4.

[2] Oetinger in his Evangelien-Predigten.

only according to 2 Cor. iv. 4 to be explained by a co-operating counterworking of Satan, makes all the might and energy of the eternal love of God in Christ impotent and of none effect.

And what is this *darkness*, which accomplishes so fearful a work as the obscuration and repulsion of the light of God? Not a mere ignorance, any more than the light is a mere doctrine or "communication of perceptions." No man, since Satan's delusion first betrayed human curiosity, ever prefers stated ignorance to the enlightenment of his mind. It is *sin*, the πονηρόν come into man from the πονηρός, but which has now established itself in him, and develops itself into one great complex whole of ἔργα πονηρά. This is the meaning of the last clause, as introductory to what follows. In these ἔργοις, however, as in the πράσσειν and ποιεῖν afterwards, we are not so much to think of the external act as such, but of the inmost and most essential deeds of the man's inner being, which are afterwards outwardly embodied. The *deeds* are here concerned, *they* are the ground of decision; and the Lord sets this forth to the learned scribe, intimating to him that there is a secret love for the darkness which consists in rejecting that truth, and vainly tarrying in mere dead theory. *Faith* or *unbelief* is an act, comes from the acting of the soul and leads to it again;—this is the last lesson which is given to Nicodemus and to us all at the close of this impressive testimony.

Ver. 20. Every attentive reader and hearer of our Lord's words must clearly perceive that here, at the close of His discourse, the φαῦλα πράσσειν and the ποιεῖν τὴν ἀλήθειαν must have a meaning which corresponds to the κρίσις between faith and unbelief. They cannot signify respectively, as independently of this connection they might signify, the latter the walk of the regenerate in truth, the former the living in wickedness and sin simply considered. For how then could any distinction take place, so that not all the evil-doers persisted in their hatred of the light? Let us endeavour to mark how this distinction is effected, and observe its process.—It has appeared to us that simple readers of our common translation have rightly thus caught the meaning:—every one that doeth *evil*, especially, that is, the utmost evil work which consists in loving rather the darkness of his sinful deeds, in desiring, maintaining, and persisting

in that darkness. But how is this found in φαῦλα πράσσων—? First of all, let the distinction, which is far from meaningless, between πράσσων now and ποιῶν afterwards, be observed; upon which Bengel says, Malitia est *irrequieta*, est quiddam *operosius* quam veritas; hinc verbis diversis notantur, uti c. 5, 29. Which passage, indeed, is certainly of great importance for the illustration of this word to Nicodemus, there, as it were, repeated. But unresting activity in evil is not of itself the critical point of decision, it is rather a sign of its being already effected; πράσσειν originally implies the carrying on or pursuing any matter, and always points to a certain devotion and subjection to the work carried on. Thus it is he who persistently practises evil, who has given himself up to it, who is bent on continuing in it; comp. the remarkable ἐργάται τῆς ἀδικίας, Luke xiii. 27, and our note upon it. (Vol. iii.) Then φαῦλα gives yet more intensity to the meaning, and indicates the *worthlessness* and *contemptibleness* of the deeds which are chosen and delighted in, in opposition to the proffered treasures of the love of God, of eternal life. Rieger has excellently said—"Although the deeds which fill up their time may not, in all instances, have a gross and vicious appearance, they are nevertheless φαῦλα, foul, contemptible, useless, and without value *as it regards any results permanent in eternity*." There further lies in these last words another distinction, which Alford has very emphatically and well pointed out (supplementing and completing the meaning which I had, however, indicated); viz., that πράσσειν is more the habit of action, without fruit and result, ποιεῖν, on the contrary, is the true doing of good, *good fruit*, good that remains. He who πράσσει, has nothing but his πρᾶγμα, he that ποιεῖ has his ποίημα—he has abiding fruit; *his works do follow him*. Though the thought thus expressed requires some modification, inasmuch as the φαῦλα also have their effect upon the final judgment.[1]

[1] The subtle allusion to the φῶς, which Lücke (I. Aufl. S. 606) was disposed to find in the etymon of φαῦλος, seems to be somewhat unintelligible. For in this etymon (φαλός, φαλύς, from φάω, φαίνω, equivalent to pale, wan, languishing) there is, indeed, something originally related to light, something good; hence, also, φαῦλος corresponds with ἁπλοῦς, and Wahl rightly observes that this word like our *schlecht* has passed from a good to

In the process of this persevering commerce with the worthlessness of sin and ungodliness there is developed an opposition to the good and the true, which having been latently present, indeed, from the beginning, ripens into an actual *hatred* of the light shining into the darkness, a hatred which already betrays and exhibits itself in the avoidance of physical light. For it can scarcely be denied that this latter allusion is included, according to the proverbial reference to wickedness shunning the light which is found among all nations, as well as in holy Scripture. This proverbial allusion to the notorious desire of evil-doers to withdraw from the external light, in order to illustrate the internal abhorrence of the true light which that symbolizes, leads us to the very point of conviction in our Lord's words. Let the passages collated by Grotius and Lampe[1] be consulted, and the double-meaning of 1 Thess. v. 7 be compared, as well as Job xxiv. 16 לֹא יָדְעוּ אוֹר, in ver. 13 yet more profoundly הָיוּ בְּמוֹרְדֵי־אוֹר. "In every sense of the word wickedness hates and avoids the light" (Baumgarten-Crusius).

This proverbial and general transitional saying is now *followed* by the declaration which discloses its full meaning:—he therefore cometh not to *the* light, in the highest and most proper sense, that is, in this case preeminently, cometh not to Me, who have come a Light into the world. Thus even after the appearance of this light there is essentially necessary on our part a voluntary responsive turning to it; and even if the coming to the light is only regarded as standing before it, and not flying from it, yet this itself infers an act of the will in coming. Thus *believing* on Him who is come approved itself to be a *coming* before Him and to His light, although, on the other hand, the drawing of the Father from above is efficient in such coming (Jno. vi. 44), and must ever be presupposed. How can faith be a thing and work of unthinking and unconsidering blindness, as is perversely said in fear or in scorn, when it is in reality nothing

an evil sense. But the phraseology of the New Testament knows only of its bad meaning—vilis, as is shown in the three other passages in which it occurs, Jno. v. 29; Tit. ii. 8; Jas. iii. 16.

[1] Among the most striking parallels, is that of Eurip. Iphig. in Taurus v. 1066, Κλεπτῶν γὰρ ἡ νὺξ, τῆς δὲ ἀληθείας τὸ φῶς. And Seneca ep. 122, gravis malæ conscientiæ lux est.

but the submitting to be enlightened into full and clear self-consciousness? But this is just what the lovers of darkness do not desire! "Ινα μὴ ἐλεγχθῇ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ: lest their life and actions should be revealed and convicted of being φαῦλον, and reproved with a wholesome and gracious judgment, different, however, from the previous κρίνειν. The word answers, indeed, to the subsequent φανερωθῇ, compare Ephes. v. 11–13. The evil man discerns, by means of the indwelling σύμφημι τῷ φωτί (Rom. vii. 16) which is excited against his will, that such a revelation and reproof threaten him, that in this light even his "*good* works" and excellent traits will be exhibited as merely φαῦλα, that he will be required to retract and renounce his *opera omnia;* and discerning this practical consequence to impend, he prefers to remain in doubting unbelief, and busily endeavours to defend himself against faith by disingenuous theoretical arguments. Let it be noted how here our Lord directs and justifies us in adopting the same plan with the unbelieving learned of our day—confidently to urge against their consciences, for their profit, that unbelief which they impose upon themselves.

But what is the precise reference here to Nicodemus? We must allow, first of all, that he *came* actually to Jesus, that is, to the light, under the impulse of a desire to know the truth. We may consequently give him his portion, as Rieger's New Testament does, in the later words—the Lord reckons his act as done in God. Nevertheless it is not "marvellous" that in these words of ver. 20 a reproving allusion to his coming *by night* should have been discerned. Herder's scornful outcry—"*petty* application! contradicts itself and has no foundation in the Scripture. Nicodemus sought the light itself in the darkness." For when we observe that the Evangelist, as was mentioned at the outset, twice subsequently alluded to the νυκτός with a tone of censure, we may reasonably suppose that he learned to do so from his Master. If, further, the allusion in μισεῖν τὸ φῶς was based, as cannot be denied, upon the actual exhibition of the shunning of external light among evil-doers, we cannot but perceive some monitory force in it for this timid night-guest. We hold, therefore, with the Evangelist and the tradition of the church, that some blame is here imputed to the coming by night; and agree

with Ebrard that "the necessity of decision was at the same time hinted at in our Lord's allusion, a decision which would not shrink from the light (of day)." We are glad that Lange also acknowledges this, and thus speaks upon vers. 20, 21—"this conclusion is purposely framed to be the last word, with which Jesus dismissed Nicodemus. If we might suppose that Jesus came with him to the door of the house, and spoke these words to him under the dark canopy of the heavens, what force of impressive warning does this dismissal assume!" And afterwards, "for the Lord gently reproves his coming by night, and seems solemnly to warn him henceforward to come to Him in the broad light of day." Assuredly, to speak with Dräseke, the great exhortation was given to him for his reflection on the way—*do thou the truth!* But wherefore were the previous words uttered to such as Nicodemus was? One may answer: to arm and fortify him against the offence of the Cross, against the hatred of the world, against the predominant and ruling unbelief of the age; and we must necessarily admit, for it is clear as day in this his coming by night, that Nicodemus was not a bold and resolute conquerer of the world. For what purpose did he seek Light in the *darkness?* Because, forsooth, something of that μισεῖν still adhered to him, because he was still involved more or less in the κόσμος, and his coming was not altogether a pure coming in light to the light. "He apparently placed himself by his coming in the night too much in the fellowship of those who prefer the darkness for their deeds." The Lord first blames this self-contradiction of his procedure, which was more than merely apparent, and then proceeds to encourage and animate him in the following words.

Ver. 21. The word of dismissal, however, hastens so quickly to its close, that this last verse contains many things which are merely hinted at, and interwoven together. The discourse presses briefly and concisely forwards to the goal of a faith which finds its consummation in act; and gives, as it were, a mystery to Nicodemus' reflection, the solution of which must be found in his own conscience and in his future life. Have not then *all* ἄνθρωποι as such ἔργα πονηρά and nothing else to present—are there any who in a state of nature do good deeds? It is, indeed, presupposed, as we have just said, that he who cometh in

faith must abide the conviction and reproof of all his past works: hence we do not find it here ex opposito, ὁ δὲ ποιῶν ἀγαθά or τὰ ἀγαθά, τὸ ἀγαθόν. But it is τὴν ἀλήθειαν. This, again, cannot indicate that "walking in the truth," which, as the fulfilment of the law, is the high prerogative of the regenerate and sanctified only; for the Lord is speaking of that first faith which is the condition thereto. *To do the truth*, in as far as it is here one with *coming to the light*, or rather the internal principle of that coming, the true act in this critical and decisive doing, can be no other than the first great work of sincerity which is followed by all other good works, and is the only one which remains in our own power. As before the φαῦλα which gives its character to the πράσσων was placed first, so now with significant meaning the ποιῶν precedes, which shows the invigorated man voluntarily placing himself in the presence of the light. For ποιεῖν "points not so much like πράττειν to the deed and work, but to the moral tone and condition of the entire spirit." (Lücke.) The man who comes in honest sincerity perceives and confesses, so soon as that truth humbles and reproves him, that the *truth* is a new and another *life*, that it is not to be learned and reasoned about, but to be *lived* and *done;* he himself *would fain* do it by the guidance of the light, and thus deciding for the truth against himself he *doeth* the truth as far as in him lies, and it is to be carefully observed that this his act is no other than his coming *out of his previous darkness* to the light. What can then befall him, but that which the opposite character hates, which he, however, acknowledges, desires and seeks as wholesome and salutary to his soul—the conviction and reproval of his evil works? If we thus naturally understand this second parallel ἵνα, we discern another remarkable variation in the expression. That which to the former was a dreaded ἐλεγχθῆναι, is to the latter a more gracious φανερωθῆναι. Is it not better for me, he thinks, to stand before God, manifest in the light of His truth, as I really am? Further, in the former case the ἔργα came first, which the evil man desired to keep in concealment; but in the latter case there is a striking change, it is αὐτοῦ τὰ ἔργα, since the sincere man desires to expose and yield up to view *himself*, and thus approves himself, on his side, as a *sincere confessor of his sin*, who finds grace from

God.[1] Behold me, a miserable *sinner!* is his language; but the response with which he is already greeted is—Mercy and grace to thee in thy sincerity! Then are *all* his previous evil ἔργα transformed into *confessed and forgiven* sins.

At this critical turning-point the Lord adjoins a final sentence which with impressive and appropriate *conciseness* interweaves the *consequence* of this transition from the darkness to light with that transition itself.[2] The acknowledgment and confession was the first work done in God, and all others that ensue flow from that. To do works *in God*, must be equivalent to the being born again, born of God. *That* cannot be merely, as Münchmeyer maintains against me, the preparatory ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ εἶναι of ch. viii. 47, or ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας of ch. xviii. 37.[3] To have ἔργα ἐν θεῷ εἰργασμένα is the great and glorious *end* to which the first ποιεῖν τὴν ἀλήθειαν in submitting to reproof and confessing sin, preparatorily leads. Hence the ὅτι is comprehensive and stops not short of this meaning. Compare the connection and progress in St John's first epistle from ch. i. 5 to ch. ii. 10. That which is here condensed and briefly intimated, is there expanded; and with a prospective reference to the great day of God, when the children of light, walking in the truth, shall be *made manifest!* What then are the stages of faith according to the testimony of Jesus to Nicodemus? First, there is the ceasing to marvel—then an acceptance of the testimony—then the coming to the light to be reproved and convicted by it, this, however, being at the same time a πιστεύειν εἰς αὐτόν (as lifted up to be beheld), and a consequent receiving of life—and in all this a *doing*, first of this great work of sincerity, then of the further works wrought in God. "With this farewell word Jesus dismissed Nicodemus that he might behold Him again in light." (Lange.)

Thus "the master in Israel had learned more in one night

[1] Bengel's qui se non pudefactum iri novit is somewhat premature; the novit must in any case be understood in a very unconscious sense.

[2] Münchmeyer "cannot understand" my exposition, simply because he is not accustomed to appreciate the profound condensation of meaning in such discourses.

[3] Or merely according to God's will, works well-pleasing to Him, as Nonnus oresses down the meaning—τάπερ ποίησε θεοῦ τετελεσμένα βουλῇ.

than Judas in three years." Seed had fallen into his heart which time must be left to fructify, "that it might take root downwards and bear fruit upwards." For a considerable time yet he remained a fearful believer, without making his open avowal, as we see in ch. xii. 42. The Evangelist is silent as to his departure, and his subsequent internal development. "It speaks for the simplicity and historic truthfulness of our Evangelist, that he adds nothing more, and even leaves untold the immediate result which the discourse had." (Baumgarten-Crusius.) And question thou not about this, but as far as thou art thyself this Nicodemus, take home the word of Jesus to thy heart! Believe, come, do the Truth! Ask no longer—how may these things be? but *let them be* in thine own experience! For it is not revealed how the sunbeam penetrates the plant, and how light and life come down upon thee from above; the new-born thing in thee thrives gradually as is the case with growth of all kinds; and finally thy living and acting in God will gloriously *become manifest*, as in the consummation of all the Divine works, whether of nature or of the Spirit!

END OF FOURTH VOLUME.

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